The Felt Hat Industry of Bristol and South Gloucestershire, 1530-1909

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Abstract

This thesis reconstructs the felt hat industry of Bristol and South Gloucestershire from its arrival in the region about 1530 until its local demise in 1909. It is a reinstatement and interpretation of a local industrial powerhouse largely neglected by Bristol's historians. The extent and influence of the trade through its ownership, employment and markets, and the lives of its workers, is discussed. No previous work has investigated the subject. There were studies of the early London hatters (Unwin, 1900-1904), those in the north west (Housley, 1929 MA; Giles, 1959; Turner 1986 MSc), and a national perspective, emphasizing one dominant firm (Smith, 1980 PhD).[1]

Early manufacture around the city soon led to a dispute over civic monopoly. Until the eighteenth century, the feltmakers of South Gloucestershire serviced the Bristol wholesalers and became the admired princes of the 'rough' trade.[2] At the acme, about 1,000 men were employed to make hats that satisfied the city's merchants in their domestic arrangements and in their overseas trade, principally in the colonies and in the slave business. About 1800, London interests displaced those of Bristol; the low-wage, high-skilled village workforce became a dependency of the capital. Through all this time, the men had a determined commitment to unchanging craft skills and a firm control of craft entry. The industry died as a backwater after enervating fights against legislation, innovation, capital and mechanisation.

Few British institutions, let alone industries, can offer an historical view covering nearly 400 years of English development. The regional felt hat trade brushed against, and was sometimes in conflict with, much of the national regulation and taxation of markets and employment, and gives a particular and often surprisingly refreshing perspective. The reality on the ground, away from broader theory, is often unexpected.[3]

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[1] George Unwin, 'A Seventeenth Century Trade Union', *The Economic Journal*, Vol. 10, No. 39, 1900, pp. 394-403; *Industrial Organisation in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Oxford, Clarendon Press 1904). Harold Housley, *The Development of the Felt Hat Industry in Lancashire and Cheshire* (unpublished MA thesis, University of Manchester, 1929). P M Giles, 'The Felt-Hatting Industry, c. 1500-1850, with particular reference to Lancashire and Cheshire', *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian* Society, Vol. LXIX, 1959, pp. 104-132. J H Smith, *The Development of the English Felt and Silk Hat Trades 1500-1912* (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Manchester, 1980). James Turner, *The First Shop in the Trade - some aspects of the history of the felt hatting industry in the early nineteenth century from the archives of Christy & Co* (unpublished MSc thesis, University of Manchester Institute of Science & Technology, 1986).

[2] 'No better stuff felt hatters than the Gloucestershire men in the United Kingdom' (*HG*, 'Reminiscences of the Hat Trade & Other Branches of Industry', by an Old Hatter, 1/6/1889). Also, David Corner, 'The Tyranny of Fashion: The Case of the Felt-Hatting Trade in the Late Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries', *Textile History*, Vol. 22, No. 2, 1991, p. 163.

[3] E A Wrigley, *Poverty, Progress, and Population* (CUP 2004), p. 3. Maxine Berg and Pat Hudson, 'Rehabilitating the Industrial Revolution', *The Economic History Review*, New Series, Vol. 45, No. 1, February 1992, pp. 18-19.

Dedication

Harriet Fanny Maggs (1889-1966), descendant of the hatters of Watley's End.

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John Bowler (Bowler)
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Geoff Bryant (Bryant)
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Ann Carnell (Dando)
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Author's declaration

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the University's Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes and that it has not been submitted for any other academic award. Except where indicated by specific reference in the text, the work is the candidate's own work. Work done in collaboration with, or with the assistance of, others, is indicated as such. Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author.

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Abbreviations

BAFHS	Bristol & Avon Family History Society
BBHA	Bristol Branch of the Historical Association
BCL	Central Reference Library, Bristol
BGAS	Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society
BL	The British Library
BM	The Bristol Mercury
BRO	Bristol Record Office
BRS	Bristol Record Society
CA	Christy Archive, Stockport Local Heritage Library
CUP	Cambridge University Press
FFBJ	Felix Farley's Bristol Journal
GA	Gloucestershire Archives
HCJ	House of Commons Journals
HG	The Hatters' Gazette
HLJ	House of Lords Journals
LG	London Gazette
LGL	Guildhall Library, London
OUP	Oxford University Press
TBGAS	Transactions of the Bristol & Gloucestershire Archaeological Society
TNA	The National Archives

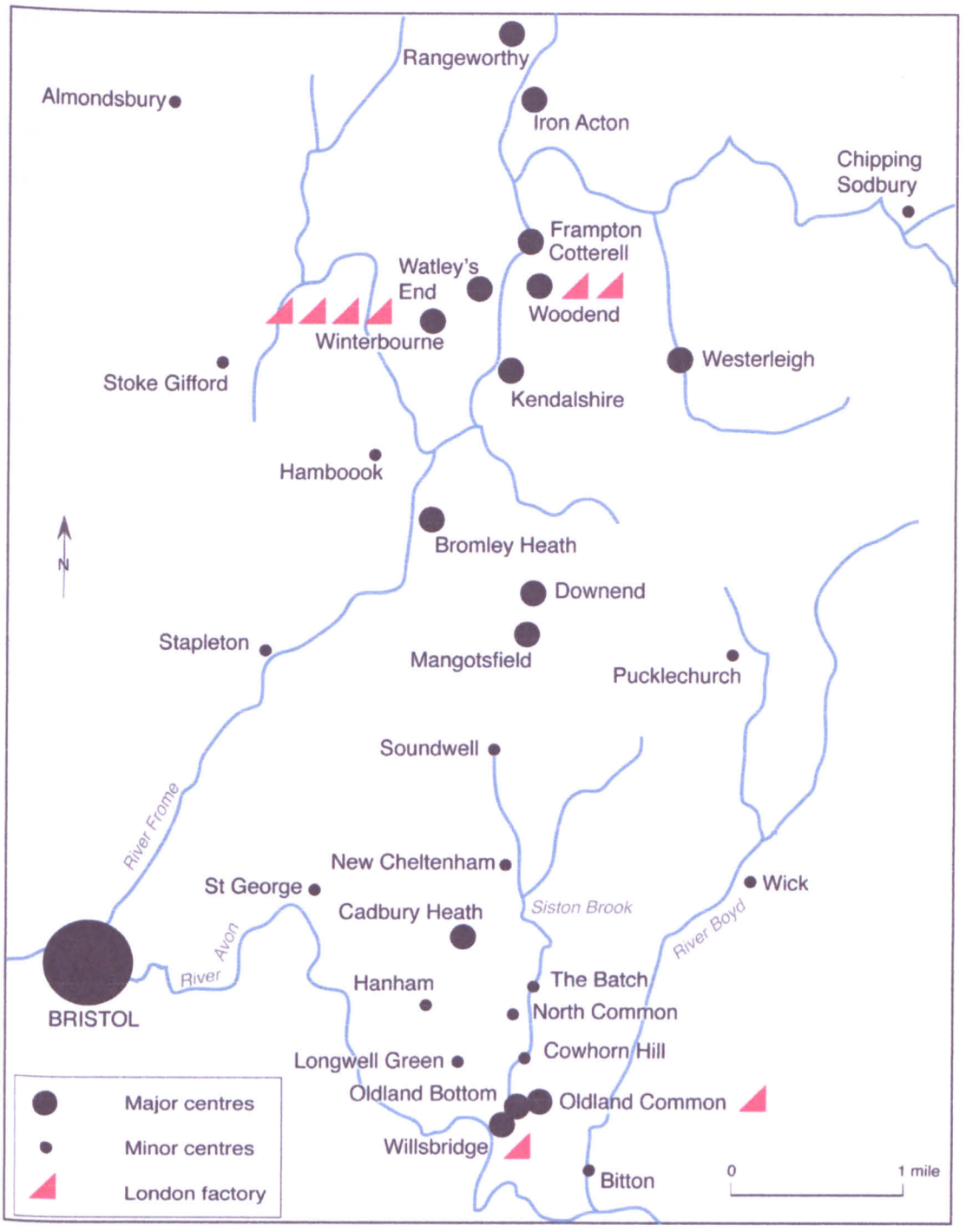

Figure 1: Frontispiece: Felt hat workshops and manufactories, 1600-1876.

Preface

I am seeking to rescue the poor stockinger, the Luddite cropper, the 'obsolete' hand-loom weaver, the 'Utopian' artisan ... from the enormous condescension of posterity. Their crafts and traditions may have been dying. Their hostility to the new industrialism may have been backward-looking. Their communitarian ideals may have been fantasies. Their insurrectionary conspiracies may have been foolhardy. But they lived through these times of acute social disturbance, and we did not.

E P Thompson[1]

The general historian must from time to time become a local historian, and focus on small detail; in that way experience is greatly enlarged, and the tapestry of history elaborated and enriched.

Joan Thirsk[2]

I have come to value books which seek to be stimulating at the risk of being wrong. I like [history] too much to see it fossilised in rocks of orthodoxy.

Felipe Fernández-Armesto[3]

Nature bestowed plumage on birds and on every animal a hairy covering, while man alone she has left naked.

Bernardino Ramazzini[4]

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[1] E P Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963, reprint London, Penguin 1980), 'Preface', p. 12.
[2] Joan Thirsk, *The Rural Economy of England* (London, Hambledon 1984), 'Preface', p. vi.
[3] Felipe Fernández-Armesto, *Before Columbus, Exploration and Colonization from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic, 1220-1492* (University of Pennsylvania Press 1987), 'Preface', p. vii.
[4] Bernardino Ramazzini, 'Diseases of weavers', *Diseases of Workers (De Morbis Artificum)*, Library of the New York Academy of Medicine, translated Wilmer Cave Wright (1700, reprint New York, Hafner 1964), p. 431.

1 Introduction

There was a large felt hat manufacturing industry in many villages in South Gloucestershire, joined after its arrival in the mid-sixteenth century to specialist finishers, wholesalers and retailers in Bristol and, from the end of the eighteenth century, to the elite of the nation's hat manufacturers in London. The industry died in the villages in the 1870s; the last felt hat was possibly made in Bristol in 1909.[1]

This first paragraph already contains more detail than is readily available in Gloucestershire histories or in the few serious discussions of the national hat trade.[2] The subject has not excited regional historians: the trade around Bristol is mentioned only in passing in academic works. For instance, Walter Minchinton's celebrated essay on Bristol as a commercial centre in the eighteenth century lists over seventy trading goods, but no hats – at that time one of the region's major employers.[3] Mentions of the hatting industry in the main county histories are sparse. The earliest complete description of Gloucestershire by Sir Robert Atkyns in 1712 did not mention the feltmakers as the 'cloathing trade is so eminent in this County, that no other Manufacture

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[1] Christy, Frampton Cotterell: Last manufacture, 1871 (CA, B/R/3/5); property auction, *BM*, 17/6/1876. Howes, Newfoundland Road, Bristol: Last Bristol felt hat company (TNA, *Factories & Workshop Act 1901: Regulations for the manufacture of felt hats, 1902*, LAB 14/170); property sale, 1909 (BRO, 38609/24/a).

[2] Unwin, 'Trade Union', pp. 394-403. J H Hawkins, *The Worshipful Company of Feltmakers* (London, Crowther & Goodman 1917). Giles, 'Felt-Hatting'. Smith, *Hat Trades*. Rosemary Weinstein, *The History of the Worshipful Company of Feltmakers 1604-2004* (Chichester, Phillimore 2004).

[3] W E Minchinton, 'Bristol – Metropolis of the West in the Eighteenth Century', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, fifth series, Vol. 4, 1954, pp. 69-89.

deserves a mention'.[4] Atkyns's much-delayed successor was Samuel Rudder's one-thousand page *New History* in 1779.[5] Rudder found a 'considerable manufacture of felt hats, which employs a pretty many hands ... of the labouring people' at Frampton Cotterell, Pucklechurch, Westerleigh, and *Winterbourn*.[6] William Marshall in 1789 had no place for descriptions of industry in the countryside.[7] Arthur Young, Marshall's adversary at the *Board of Agriculture*, commissioned the first *General View* of Gloucestershire in 1794 which was also without hatters.[8] A second *General View* in 1807 by Thomas Rudge was a 'vast improvement over [the previous] slight work' and 'more comprehensive' than even Marshall's.[9] Rudge wrote that 'felt hats are made and principally employ the lower classes at Frampton Cotterell, Iron Acton, Pucklechurch, Rangeworthy, and other villages in the neighbourhood, for the

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[4] Brian S Smith, 'Introduction', Part II, pp. v, ix, xv, Sir Robert Atkyns, *The Ancient and Present State of Glostershire*, Parts I and 2 (London, Bowyer 1712, reprint Gloucestershire County Library and E P Publishing 1974), p. 78.

[5] Samuel Rudder, *A New History of Gloucestershire* (1779, reprint Stroud, Nonsuch 2006), Smith 'Introduction', p. xvii. Also N M Herbert, 'Introduction' to the 1977 edition of Rudder, unpaginated.

[6] Rudder, *New History*, pp. 294, 454, 610, 806, 834; the last two references unindexed. Manuscript spellings different from modern spellings are italicised.

[7] William Marshall, *The Rural Economy of Gloucestershire*, 1789 (Stroud, edited Nonsuch 2005). Unattributed 'Introduction', p. 12.

[8] 'The *Board of Agriculture* was not a Government department ... but an association of gentlemen, chiefly landowners, for the advancement of agriculture, who received a grant from the Government of £3,000 a year' (W H R Curtler, *The Enclosure and Redistribution of our Land*, Oxford, Clarendon Press 1920), p. 182. George Turner, *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Gloucester, with observations on their means of its improvement* (London, The Board of Agriculture and Internal Improvement 1794).

[9] Thomas Rudge, *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Gloucester* (London, The Board of Agriculture and Internal Improvement 1807). Also, Nicholas Herbert, 'Thomas Rudge' (ODNB, accessed 5/2011). Why Rudge was chosen to write the second *General View* is not known, but he had published four years before a history of Gloucester which he described as a compression of Atkyns's work 'into a narrower compass, and to fill up the interval of the last century' (Preface, *The History of the County of Gloucester; compressed and brought down to the year 1803*, 2 vols., Gloucester, Harris 1803). Its only mention of hatters was at Frampton Cotterell, repeated in 1807.

Bristol trade'.[10] The 1831 national census abstract reported that 'upwards of 600 men are employed in making hats of felt at Frampton Cotterell and Winterbourne ... and a few makers of hats in the City of Bristol'.[11]

By the time of the comprehensive Victoria County Histories in 1907, the hat industry was almost forgotten.[12] Why should this happen so quickly? With regularity since, a regional publication resurrects a variant of the story of 'mad hatters' laced with mercury, or local links with the Stetson cowboy hat, or may hint darkly at some hazy connection with Bristol's slave trade.[13] Thirsk found many other consumer industries were 'totally neglected'.[14] She hoped that others would 'catch my enthusiasm, and will think it worthwhile to investigate'.[15]

There is one record of early felt hatmaking in Bristol, the two-volume minute book of the city's Company of Feltmakers and Haberdashers, 1595-1865, transcribed in 2010 by the author.[16] The book was a happy survivor of a fire

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[10] Rudge, *General View*, p. 342.
[11] *Abstract of answers and returns under the Population Act, II George IV, c. 30*, 1831, pp. 226-227. Also Thomas A Welton, *Statistical Papers based on the Census of England and Wales and relating to The Occupations of the People and The Increase of Population 1841-1851* (London, Private 1860), p. 102.
[12] William Page, edited, 'A History of Gloucestershire', Vol. II, *Victoria History of the Counties of England* (London, Constable 1907).
[13] For example, D Vinter, 'Village Hatters', *HG*, March 1958, pp. 62-63; D Vinter, 'Early Hat-making in Gloucestershire', *Gloucestershire Countryside*, April 1958, pp. 126-127; *Bristol Evening Post*, 1/7/1992.
[14] Joan Thirsk, *Economic Policy and Projects; the Development of a Consumer Society in Early Modern England* (Oxford, Clarendon Press 1978), p. vi.
[15] For general difficulties in analysing retail trades, M J Daunton, *Progress and Poverty, An Economic and Social History of Britain 1700-1850* (OUP 1995), pp. 330-334.
[16] Bristol Feltmaker and Haberdasher Minute Book, Vol. 1, 1595-1673, Vol. 2, 1673-1865 (BRO, 08156/1&2). Some of the book's pages are damaged by use or light. Record keeping is occasionally haphazard and the writing sometimes challenging. At one point in the second

which took place 'in the hatters' premises' in 1820.[17] Master John Dowell reported that the Company's chest, which contained various parchments and papers, was totally destroyed.[18] The book's purpose was to record the Company's articles, major administrative events, and the collection of associated fines, the keeping of accounts, deaths, the assumption of widow's attendance rights, and charitable payments.[19] These events included the taking of apprentices, admission on completion, appointments of masters and wardens, and the collection of quarterage.[20] Interspersed among the day-to-day happenings, were resolutions on some of the Company's major concerns.

The trade has left no significant architectural marks in the city. The remnants of its great distribution centre in Bristol's Castle ward were buried in their cellars after the visits of the *Luftwaffe* in 1940.[21]

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volume, recording breaks off and restarts from the 'back end'. Grateful thanks to Margaret McGregor, archivist and researcher, for her considerable assistance with reading and transcribing these volumes.

[17] Fire 7/3/1820; report 20/11/1820 (BRO, 08156/2), p. 418.

[18] The capitalised word 'Company', hereafter, stands for the *Bristol Company of Feltmakers and Haberdashers.*

[19] Few such records remain in the Bristol archives. Those of the Merchant Venturers are the most prominent, but there are others for the bakers, merchant tailors, soapmakers, and wiredrawers and pinmakers. All of these, unlike those of the feltmakers and haberdashers, have been examined in depth by others and, at least in part, transcribed: Minute Book of the Company of Bakers 1499-1732 (BRO, 08155/1); 'Journeymen's Bonds 1688-1764', Company of Merchant Taylors of Bristol (BRO, 19841/1); Harold Evan Matthews, edited, *Proceedings Minutes and Enrolments of the Company of Soapmakers 1562-1642* (BRS, Vol. X, 1940), Wiredrawers and Pinmakers Company Records, 2 vols. (BCL, B5029-30).

[20] 'Quarterage was the dues paid each quarter by freemen to the guild, to finance protection of their craft and trade, and the guild's social events and charities' (Michael John Walker, *The Extent of the Guild Control of Trades in England c. 1660-1820; A Study Based on a Sample of Provincial Towns and London Companies* (unpublished PhD thesis, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge University, October 1985), p. 31.

[21] The importance of the Castle area to Bristol's hat trade is discussed in Chapter 5: *Home trade, 1600-1855.*

The village hatters bequeathed few direct records other than scattered indentures and unremarked sites of small workshops. Not one local individual or business kept a note of activities, at least not one which survives. The 'labouring poor' did not leave their 'houses stashed with documents for historians to work over nor do they invite identification with their back-breaking toil'.[22] The only archive to cast some light on commercial hatting in South Gloucestershire was kept from 1813 by the London firm of Christy and dealt spasmodically with their Frampton Cotterell manufactory.[23]

This thesis therefore begins with a blank page on which to record findings. Its contents come mainly from an examination of the public records that deal with events of personal passage. These records include asylum and prisoner registrations, censuses, civic and parish listings, court reports, export manifests, inclosure awards, indentures in public and private holdings, land taxes, leases, newspapers, poll books, poor rates, probate inventories, religious attendances, settlement awards, tithes, wills, and the occasional business letter or petition.[24] They are interspersed with a large amount of civic and national legislation. Parliamentary activity was relentless and broadly based. From 1500 to 1850, there were over 100 acts that affected hatting closely in twelve major spheres of ongoing and developing Government

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[22] E P Thompson, *Customs in Common* (London, Penguin 1991), p. 18. Also, on the 'backdrop of life', Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (London, Yale University Press 2009), p. 3.

[23] The Frampton Cotterell part of the archive is loosely catalogued and scattered among the files. Appendix 1: *Christy Archive.*

[24] These records are cited at their place of reference.

concern.[25] The majority of these acts were influenced directly or indirectly by the industry through petitions or evidence, but there were also a limited number of general purpose acts where the views of the industry were incidental to the formation of new law, but the legislation was far-reaching in its effect on the industry.

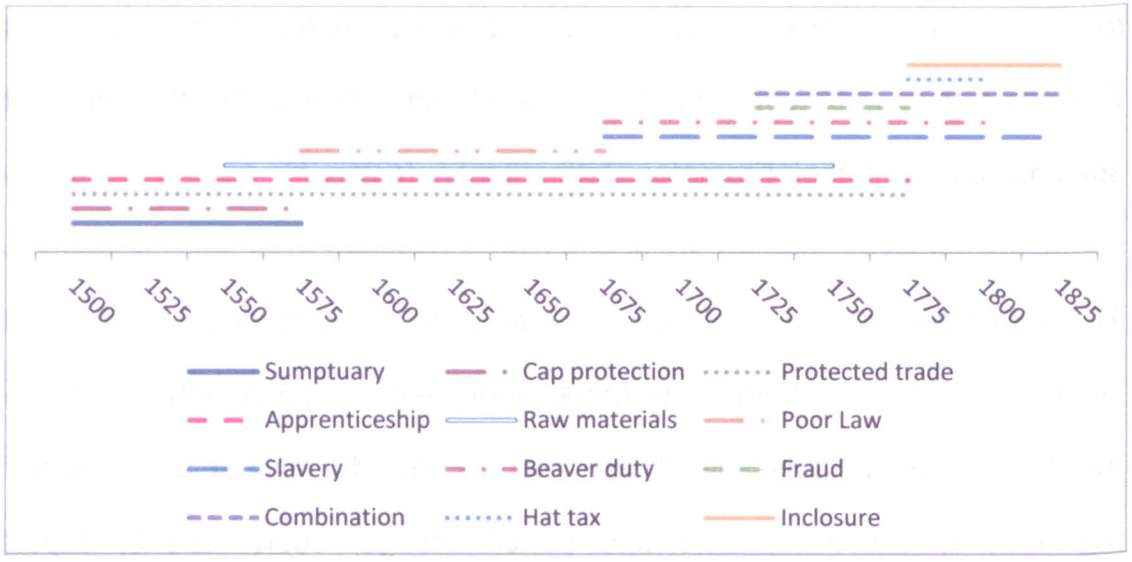

Figure 2: Hatters and parliament: over 100 petitions and acts.

None of the public records to be investigated were assembled by its bureaucrats with the intent of reporting on a particular industrial group; they are even-handed to anyone reconstructing a craft. For part of their period, some of the records allocate occupations; many do not. Local parish registers, for instance, began around 1600, but only in the later eighteenth century was occupation regularly noted.[26] Where occupations are not available, there is one other aid: a nominal list by decade of about 4,000 hatters and their

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[25] Appendix 2: *Legislation affecting the hat industry,1500-1825.*

[26] Parish registers were instituted in 1538 and remained until the state assumed responsibility for vital registration 300 years later (E A Wrigley and R S Schofield, *The Population History of England 1541-1871, A Reconstruction*, 1981, reprint CUP 1989), pp. 1-2.

villages, accumulated by the author from multiple sources.[27] For detailed analyses of a village's parish records, the 18,541 records of births, marriages and burials for Winterbourne are used.[28] Reconstructions also rely on sources from outside of the county, and on secondary material, both appropriate because of the national and unchanging nature of the craft. The feltmakers' 'dimly flickering antecedents' require considerable contextual material to give meaning.[29]

There is a seemingly intractable problem of terminology when examining the roots of the felt hat industry. It involves definitions of both *felt* and *hat*. *Hat* can be quickly and unhelpfully described. Hats date in England from the tenth century and were made of many materials.[30] Archaeological evidence is wary of differentiating between early imports and, perhaps, older felting skills, subsequently lost.[31] In 1347, the Hatters' Company of London was incorporated, but it is not known whether these hatters worked in felt.[32] Makers described the felt hat as the 'most conspicuous article of dress, and surmounting all the rest, it has often been ornamented with showy plumes,

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[27] Appendix 3: *Village hatters, 1575-1901*.
[28] Base primarily on twenty files at *www.frenchaymuseumarchives.co.uk* (courtesy of Ray Bulmer), re-tabulated in their respective categories, and then manipulated. Records from local Methodist chapels were added, as appropriate, as were those records of All Saints Church, Winterbourne Down, following the Winterbourne Division Act of 1841 (8 George III, c. XLII) which split the old parish into two parts. For growth of non-conformist chapels from the eighteenth century with their own registers both of baptisms and burial, see Wrigley and Schofield, *Population*, p. 15.
[29] 'Dimly-flickering antecedents' is from a phase used by Adrian Randall in the *Bulletin for the Study of Labour History*, No. 49, Autumn 1984, pp. 7-22.
[30] C W and P E Cunnington and Charles Beard, *A Dictionary of English Costume 900-1900* (London, Adam & Charles Black 1960), p. 103.
[31] Elisabeth Crowfoot, Frances Pritchard, Kay Staniland, *Textiles and Clothing 1150-1450* (Museum of London, The Boydell Press 1992), pp. 75-6.
[32] Giles, 'Felt-Hatting', p. 104.

and jewels, and with bands of gold [and] silver', but admitted there were 'hats without brims' and caps 'provided with a margin'.[33] Other definitions insist on a crown as well as a brim. The hat historian, Michael Harrison, despaired of a complete definition:

> ... archaeological discovery reveals nothing like a 'basic hat', any more than scientific philology reveals the pattern of 'basic speech' ... For the first time in the early part of the fifteenth century, we encounter hats of a modern type: the moulded, brimmed, symmetrical hat, which is not a cap, or hat-cap or anything else but a hat.[34]

By the nineteenth century, the definition was clear: the hat was distinguished from a cap by 'having a brim, which a cap has not'.[35]

Early use of *felt* concentrated in a 1,000 kilometre band between the Balkans and eastern Mongolia.[36] As a quick fabric-making technique that requires little specialized equipment, felt still plays an important role in the lives of nomadic peoples, used for tent covering, clothing, blankets, rugs, and votive images. Patterns and motifs as well as the labour-intensive processes are passed down through older family members and, consequently, 'methods vary and

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[33] For example, Fiona Clark, *Hats* (London, Batsford 1982), p. 9; F Rogers, *The Bristol Craft Gilds during the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (unpublished MA thesis, University of Bristol, 1949), p. 22.
[34] Michael Harrison, *The History of the Hat* (London, Herbert Jenkins 1960), pp. 11, 71.
[35] John Thomson, *A Treatise on Hat-Making and Felting including a full Exposition of the Singular Properties of Fur, Wool and Hair* (Philadelphia, Henry Carey Baird; London, E&FN Spon 1868), p. 85, reprinted in Suzanne Pufpaff, compiled, *Nineteenth Century Hat Maker's and Felter's Manuals* (1829, London, reprint Nashville, USA, Pufpaff 1995).
[36] Michael and Veronika Gervers, 'Felt-making Craftsmen of the Anatolian and Iranian Plateux', *Textile Museum Journal*, Vol. IV, No. 1, December 1974, p. 15.

new or better methods are rarely introduced'.[37] No example of felt has been found in Africa, including Ancient Egypt, or in aboriginal America.[38]

Irena Turnau and Mary Burkett, the two pre-eminent historians of feltmaking, offer slightly different dating and appraisals, but their agreement on antiquity is not in doubt.[39] The oldest felt reference provided by Turnau was a two-colour carpet identified in a wall painting of 6,500-6,300 BC in the 'deepest layer of the Neolithic site in Çatal Hüyük on the Anatolian Konya Plain'.[40] She suggested that the 'invention of such a simple textile technique as felting may have appeared independently in Asia and in Europe' and was 'assuredly older than the art of spinning or weaving ... felted stuffs followed immediately, or originated contemporaneously with, the custom of using animal skins or furs as garments'.[41] Burkett thought that 'in all probability [felt is] the earliest form of textile making':

> Through T'ang writers we first hear of felt in Tibet and that the Chinese were familiar with the famous felt industry of Persia. Herodotus gives accounts of its frequent use amongst the Persians and associated tribes.[42] Strabo, for example, describes the felt caps of the Persians as 'high turbans of felt' which protected them from

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[37] Mary E Burkett, *The Art of the Feltmaker* (Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Kendal, 1979, reprint Kendal, Wilson 1999), pp. 7-9. Melina Raissnia, *Salon du Tapis d'Orient* (available www.turkotek.com/salon, accessed 2011).
[38] Berthold Laufer, 'The Early History of Felt', *American Anthropologist*, New Series, Vol. 32, No. 1, January-March 1930, p. 1.
[39] Burkett is the current president (2012) of the International Feltmakers Federation, available *www.feltmakers.com*, accessed 2008. Conversations 2008-2009.
[40] Irena Turnau, *Hand-Felting in Europe and Asia from the Middle Ages to the 20th Century* (Warsaw, Institute of Archaeology and Ethnology, Polish Academy of Sciences 1997), p. 9.
[41] Turnau, *Hand-Felting*, p. 7. Turnau also noted that felt-denoting terms in the Romance languages were not derived from the Latin *pileus*, but from the Germanic Slavic languages, for example Czech *plst*, and Turkish *oilik*, and each had different roots. Also Laufer, 'Early History', pp. 17-18.
[42] Herodotus, *The Histories* (540-420 BC, Phoenix, Orion, 1992), VII, p. 92.

the cold winters of Media. [43] The Medes themselves can still be seen in the fifth century B.C. portrayed in their rounded felt caps in the reliefs of the Achaemenian palaces of Persepolis.

Figure 3: Mongols moving their felt gers, 1243.[44]

The Christy family, England's leading hat manufacturers into the twentieth century, thought the art of feltmaking was brought to Western Europe from the Holy Land by followers of the crusades.[45] Turnau discovered that the 'slender clues' of felt remnants found in Europe so often pointed to hats and caps. Her examples of alternative uses include North German saddle covers and

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[43] Mary E Burkett, 'An Early Date for the Origin of Felt', *Anatolian Studies*, Vol. 27, 1977, p. 111, citing Herodotus, XV 3, p. 15. Also 'On Felt', *The Richard E Wright Research Reports*, Vol. III, No. 5, September 1985, available http://rob.com/wrights/8509_felt.html, accessed 2007.

[44] In 1247 Friar Giovanni Di Plano Carpini was sent by Pope Innocent IV to offer Christianity to the Mongolians. He described their gers (or yurts) as 'round and prepared like tents made cleverly of laths and sticks ... The walls and the roof are covered by felt, and even the doors are made of felt. Some huts are large and some are small, depending upon the wealth or poverty of the owners ... Whenever they travel, whether to war or other places, they always take their homes with them'. Text and drawing based on William of Rubruk, *Recueil de voyages et de mémoires* (1253, edited, Paris, Société de Géographie 1893). 'Genghis Khan adopted a comprehensive designation for the unified Turko-Mongolian tribes of Asia, he called them in official acts and proclamations *the generations that live in felt tents*, as differentiated from the conquered subjugated and tributary nations' (Leonardo Olschki, *The Myth of Felt*, University of California Press 1949), p. 14.

[45] John Christie-Miller, collected, *Feltmakers, a Record of Two Feltmaking Families* (Private circulation, 1957).

possible battlefield masks and caftans (9/13th century), toy animals from Gdansk (11), tarred felt for caulking boats in Schleswig (11/12), footwear padding in Amsterdam (13/14), and blankets and mattresses in Adriatic towns (13/14).[46] In England, there are unsupported stories of felt used as padding within armour and on sailing warships either on the feet of powder monkeys to stop sparks in the magazine or in sheets hung in battle between the guns to catch wood splinters.[47]

Felt is unique: unlike other fabrics it is unwoven and has no thread.[48] It is manufactured when animal hair or wool is rolled and squeezed, usually into near-boiling acidic liquor, but certainly under heat, until becoming an even compact mass. The matted surface can resist rain, wind, dust and sun. Felt does not fray even when damaged; its edges remain as cut without binding. Pliny said that compressed felt, well soaked in vinegar, was capable of resisting iron and even fire.[49] In its simplest form, wool tucked between the toes for comfort while wearing a pair of sandals will felt over the day.[50]

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[46] Turnau, *Hand-Felting*, pp. 21-56.
[47] Correspondence with Thom Richardson, Keeper of Armour, Royal Armouries Museum, Leeds (2008 email); National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London; and Portsmouth Historic Dockyard (2007 emails). Also, Richardson, *The London Armourers of the Seventeenth Century* (Leeds, Royal Armouries Publications 2004).
[48] Douglas A Russell, 'Uses of Felt at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre', *Educational Theatre Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 3, October 1955, p. 202.
[49] *Selections from Pliny's Letters*, VIII, 73 (CUP, 1973). Pliny's claim was tested and found correct by André Papadopoulo Vretos (*Report to the Academy of Inscriptions and Letters*, Paris, 1845).
[50] This is the well-travelled story attributed to St Clement, the fourth bishop of Rome, and patron saint of the English hatters (Pufpaff, *Manuals*), p. 21.

Mongolian horsemen placed a wool blanket on a new horse's back, rode all day, and were rewarded with a perfectly shaped and hard felted saddle.[51]

The secret of felt's adhesive powers lies in the serrations on the side of the animal fibre. The closer the serrations and the finer the hair, as in the superlative beaver, the neutria (coypu) and the musquash (muskrat), the better is the felt quality. The fibre's teeth all point in the same direction and 'present an obstacle to the motion of the fibre'.[52] *Velcro* is the nearest man-made equivalent. Wool makes a lesser quality felt, especially for hats because, instead of serrations there are raised scales, which provide looser purchase. Castilian Merino sheep make the best quality wool felt; long, straggly wool makes the poorest.[53]

Figure 4: Microscopic view of a fibre of beaver fur, 1834.[54]

The difficulty with the word *felting*, when used in the hat trade, is its confusion and transferability with *fulling*. A hat is felted when loose fibre is compressed

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[51] P A Andrews, 'The White House of Khurusan: The Felt Tents of the Iranian Yomut and Göklen', *British Institute of Persian Studies*, Vol. 11, 1973, pp. 93-110.
[52] George Dodd, 'Day at a Hat-Factory', *Days at the Factories*, Chapter 7 (1843, Charles Knight; reprint New York, Augustus Kelley 1967), pp. 145-147.
[53] The quality is determined by the number and strength of the serrations. A wool of short fibre, such as merino, will show from 2,700 to 2,800 serrations to the inch; a wool of long fibre like the English Leicester may have only 1,800' (R Perry, 'The Gloucestershire woollen industry, 1600-1914', unpublished PhD (Economics) thesis, University of London, 1947), p. 50.
[54] Dodd, 'Hat-Factory', p. 146.

into felt material. Fulling takes woven or loose *knitted* material and compacts it through beating by hand, foot or machine. Mann summarised the use of short carded wool, 'felted at the fulling mill, and finished by raising and shearing the nap to a smooth surface in which warp and weft were so completely united that neither could be separately distinguished'.[55]

The art of fulling is of long-standing.[56] In 1376, the hurers of London successfully petitioned against mechanical fulling for hats and caps.[57] The same year, Richard Lichfeld confessed to sending four dozen caps to the cloth fulling mill 'after the order by the hurers forbidding it' and was fined £1.[58] In 1392, a jury of hurers in London led by Ralph Bristowe ordered the caps of John Godefray burned because caps 'could not and ought not to be fulled under the feet or in any other way than by the hands of men'.[59] A feltmaker must full his hats by hand at his kettle, reflecting the need for close attention to a small product of good quality. In 1404, the ban was extended to include

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[55] J de Lacy Mann, *The Cloth Industry in the West of England from 1640 to 1880* (OUP 1971), Chapter V, 'The advent of spinning and finishing machinery'.

[56] John H Munro, 'Medieval Woollens: Textiles, Textile Technology and Industrial Organisation, c. 800-1500', Chapter 4 (David Jenkins, edited, *The Cambridge History of Western Textiles*, Vol. 1, CUP 2003). E M Carus-Wilson, 'An Industrial Revolution of the Thirteenth Century', *Economic History Review*, 1st series (1941), reprinted in *Medieval Merchant Venturers: Collected Studies* (London, 1954), pp. 187-189, repeated in 'The Woollen Industry', in M M Postan and E E Rich, editors, *Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, Vol. II: 'Trade and Industry in the Middle Ages' (Cambridge, 1952), pp. 372-428.

[57] The hurers (French *hure* = cap) specialised in thrombed caps; their chief duty was fulling (H T Riley, edited, *Memorials of London and London Life in the Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (London, 1868), p. 403. Also Weinstein, *Feltmakers*, p. 2.

[58] The fulling mills at Wandelsworth, Oldeford, Stratford and Enefeld were used by the fullers to full their cloth with earth and water. Fulling with syge (urine) was also banned as 'deceitful and prejudicial to the Commonalty' (R R Sharpe, *Calendar of Letter-Books of the City of London, 1375-1399*, London, Francis, 1902, folios xli-l0 pp. 32-49; (*Calendar of Plea and Memoranda Rolls of the City of London*, Vol. 2, 1364-1381, 1929, Roll A 22, 1376-1377), pp. 231-244; both available www.british-history.ac.uk, accessed 2007).

[59] Sharpe, *Letter-Books*, folios ccliii – cclx, 1390, pp. 354-366.

fulling in mills. Felting of caps was to be 'only by the hands of men, and again offending citizens were punished'.[60]

Cloth fulling by machine can be traced in Gloucestershire to the twelfth century with a first mill at Barton in 1185.[61] There are several references in the thirteenth century in both Bristol and Gloucester to the occupational surname of *Felter* in the cloth industry.[62] Bicknell in the *Little Red Book of Bristol* records seventeen trade guilds with the weavers and fullers both active in 1346 while, at that time, *vico fullonum*, the street of the fullers, was a prominent route, south of Bristol Bridge.[63]

A contemporary example of the important differentiation between cap and hat comes with the *chéchia*, the felted woollen bonnet, cap or hat used in many

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[60] Riley, *Memorials of London*, pp. 401-404, for some history of these disputes in London dating from 1376. Also, *The true fulling and thickening of hats and caps* [1563] (HLJ, Vol. 1), pp. 77-79.

[61] Munro, 'Medieval Woollens', p. 205. Also E M Carus-Wilson, *Medieval Merchant Venturers* (London, Methuen 1954), pp. 187-189.

[62] C R Elrington, edited, *Abstracts of Feet of Fines Relating to Gloucestershire 1300-1359* (Gloucestershire Record Series, Vol. 20, 2006).

[63] Francis B Bickley, edited, *The Little Red Book of Bristol* (Bristol, Crofton Hemmons 1900), Vol. 1, p. xxi; Vol. 2, pp. 2-14, with many ordinances of other guilds continuing throughout in this general period. Roger H Leech, 'Arthur's Acre: a Saxon bridgehead at Bristol', *TBGAS*, Vol. 127, 2009, p. 11, citing Bickley, *Little Red Book*, Vol. 1, pp. 7-9. Also investigated: F F Fox, 'Complaint of the Tuckers' Guild of Bristol, 1568' in, edited, *Some Account of the Guild of Weavers in Bristol: chiefly from MSS* (Bristol, 1889, reprint Kessinger Legacy 2012), pp. 91-94. *Bristol Common Council: Ordinances for City Companies 1606-1745* (BRO, 04369); *Bristol Minutes of Common Council* (BRO, M/BCC/CCP/2); Peter Fleming, 'A New Look at the Maire of Bristowe Is Kalendar', *Regional Historian*, Issue 9, Summer 2002; R C Latham, edited, *Bristol Charters, 1509-1899* (BRS, Vol. X11, 1947). J F Nichols and John Taylor, *Bristol Past and Present*, Vol. 1, 'Civil History' (Bristol, Arrowsmith 1881); H E Nott, edited, *The Deposition Books of Bristol*, Vol. 1, 1643-1647 (BRS, Vol. 6, 1935) & Vol. 2, 1650-1654, edited Nott & Elizabeth Ralph (BRS, Vol. 13, 1947); Robert Ricart, *The Maire of Bristow is Kalendar*, edited Lucy Toulmin Smith, (Camden Society, New Series, V, 1872; reprint Cornell University Library 2007); M Stanford, *The Ordinances of Bristol 1506-1598* (BRS, Vol. 41, 1990); E W W Veale, edited, *The Great Red Book of Bristol* (BRS, *Introduction, Part 1, Vol. 2, 1931; Text,* Part 1, Vol. 4, 1933; *Text, Part II, Vol. 8, 1937; Text, Part. III, Vol. 19, 1950;* Text *Part IV, Vol.* 18, 1953).

colours and guises throughout the Mediterranean.[64] A similar article, in knitted or felted form, was common throughout southern Europe and also formed the backbone of the English headware industry.[65] The knitted cap was Bristol's stock head covering before the arrival of the felt hat. Today's Tunisian trade highlights the manufacturing of felted bonnets or caps by processes which are largely unchanged from at least the fifteenth century.[66] The Moslem makers of the popular red bonnet were expelled from Andalusia around 1607 after the Christian reconquest from the Moors.[67] The entire production was welcomed into an existing small industry in Tunis by the ruling Deys who established three souks in the Medina; the industry built the fortune of *la Régence de Tunis* making *'tomber une pluie d'or sur le pays'*.[68] By the eighteenth century, the trade employed 5,000 people producing 450,000 *chéchias* each year.[69]

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[64] For instance, the Turkish fez, megidi or tarbouch, and black or magenta chéchia in Libya, (François Savary Brèves, *Relation des voyages de Monsieur de Brèves, tant en Grèce, Terre Saincte et Aegypte qu'aux royaumes de Tunis et Arger, ensemble un traicté faict l'an 1604*, Paris, Gasse 1628), Vol. 2, p. 310; (Donald Quataert, 'Clothing Laws, State, and Society in the Ottoman Empire, 1720-1829', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol. 29, No.3, August 1997), pp. 412-419. 'Redd cappes for marriners' in England were supplied from the Barbary Coast at the end of the sixteenth century (Mika ben Miled, *Le petit livre de la Chéchia*, Tunis, Script 2004), p. 17, citing *un document anglais de la fin du XVI[e] s. Chéchias*, for example, are evident in several of the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel, for instance the *Baptism of Christ*, Pietro Perugino, 1480-1481.

[65] The differentiation between the knitted cap and felted hat was legalised in 1565 (8 Elizabeth, c. 55).

[66] Miled, *Petit livre*, pp. 47-48.

[67] Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *Don Quixote*, translated John Rutherford (1604-1605, 1615, reprint London, Penguin 2003), Vol. 1, pp. 487; Vol. 2, pp. 639, 777-778. David Landes, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations* (London, Little, Brown 1998), pp. 64-65. Miled, *Petit livre*, pp. 47-50.

[68] Miled, *Petit livre*, p. 50, which cites Hassan Massoudy, Histoire des Emirs. There was also a large chéchia industry in Marseilles from at least the sixteenth century, in part providing bonnets for Provençal fishermen (Miled, *Petit livre*, p. 17); also Lucette Valensi, 'Islam et capitalisme: production et commerce des chéchias en Tunisie et en France aux XVIIIe et XIXe siècles', *Revue d'histoire modern et contemporaine*, T. 16e, No. 3, July-September 1969, pp. 376-400; Paul Masson, *Histoire des établissements et du commerce française dans l'Afrique barbaresque, 1560-1793. Algérie, Tunisie, Tripolitaine, Maroc* (Paris, Librairie Hachette 1903, reprint Nabu 2012), pp. 161, 318 and others.

[69] Christopher Spring and Julie Hudson, 'Urban Textile Traditions of Tunisia', *African Arts*, Vol. 37, No, 3, Autumn 2004, p. 24.

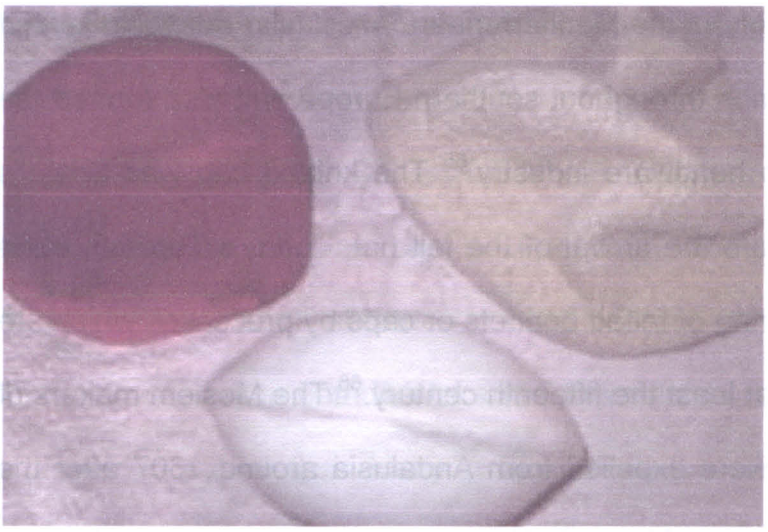

Figure 5: The three main stages of manufacture of the *chéchia*.

The *chéchia* is first hand-knitted by women using wool from the merino sheep.[70] The knitted bonnet or *kabbùs* (top right), is fulled (bottom centre) and given a first carding.[71] It is dyed and, at the souks, wetted and forced on to pottery hat blocks to give a final shape and size (top left). Makers, in small, open, combined workshops and retail outlets lining the souk streets, raise the nap with a combination of a teasel and tougher metal look-alike tool.[72]

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[70] The work is centred in *Ariana*, north of Tunis. Merino wool is today imported from Australia.
[71] Traditionally carried out at *Tebourba*, a town near to Tunis.
[72] Visit to Tunis 2011. Also Spring and Hudson, 'Textile Traditions', pp. 28-31.

Figure 6: Napping a *chéchia* with a metal 'teasel'; a real teasel is bottom left. The worker wears a *kukan*, a leather knee-guard, and uses a *batrun*, a wax-covered *chéchia* for support. He then sits on several napped *chéchias*, each in a wooden 'book', to press them.

The new idea in Europe in the fifteenth century, and within one hundred years in England, was to make the felt first and only then to form the felt into a hat.[73] The benefit to the hatmaker was that a knitted starting point was no longer needed, but he did have to learn felting skills.[74] The benefits to the wearer were that the felt hat would take rough use without fraying and was more waterproof.

[73] J S Moore, 'The Parish's History: its Settlement', in *Winterbourne AD 2000* (Winterbourne Parochial Church Council 2000), p. 21.
[74] Discussed in Chapter 3: *The villages to 1700* and Chapter 7: *Difference, 1700-1865.*

Figure 7: Felt hats with 'outlandish brims and crowns', c. 1600.[75]

The consequence was the introduction of style. The pliability of the basic felt hood allowed it to be stretched, after dampening in hot water, over a wooden hat block (the same in purpose as the pottery used in making the *chéchia*). The felt hat introduced 'outlandish brims and crowns' because, fortified with any glue-like substance, it would hold its shape. Stiffeners travelled to the centre of the felt giving a tough and durable hat and, as a bonus, left a nap both inside and out.[76] The best formula for a stiffener was constantly sought, with tar, glue, and shellac forming the more regular ingredients.[77] The result

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[75] Robert Greene, *A Quip for an Upstart Courtier (London 1592-1635), frontispiece, (left); Haec-Vir: Or The Womanish-Man (London 1620), title page.*

[76] The most famous example was the ubiquitous 'Bowler' hat which was devised to the order of the Honourable William Coke, younger brother of the second Earl of Leicester, to protect the heads of horsed gamekeepers from 'overhanging branches of trees, and closely fitting so that it would not easily blow or fall off'; and against poachers' sticks in subsequent scuffles. The prototype was tested at the makers, James Lock of 6 St James's Street, London. Coke placed it on the shop floor and stepped on it. The hat withstood his weight; Coke paid his 12s and left with the hat (Frank Whitbourn, *Mr Lock of St James's Street: His Continuing Life and Changing Times*, London, Heinemann 1971), pp. 122-127.

[77] The lac is a red, winged bug about a millimetre long which lives in many tropical countries. Female lacs secrete a reddish sticky substance from their pores to provide protection for their incubating larvae. Felt hoods treated with refined lac resin (shellac) become tough, stiff and waterproof. The proofing disappears into the fabric, forming a thin internal layer and leaving the surface untouched. Only a few trees facilitate commercial production, including the Flame of the Forest (*Palas*) and the wild edible plum. The Angelo Brothers established a shellac refining factory in Calcutta in 1855, reported closed through trade union action in the mid 1990s. Shellac has been used in dentistry, French polishes, gramophone records, mirror

was that many designs could be formed. Felt hats were already satirised by 1583 and this, perhaps unintentionally, showed the versatility of this new felt product.[78] Fashions were as 'rare and straunge' with some made of 'wooll, and which is more curious, some of a certain kind of fine hair, farfetched and dear bought'. Seventeenth and eighteenth century hat fashions were extremely sensitive to the politics of the day. 'Every major political upheaval brought in its train a corresponding change in hat styles'.[79] In later years, came utilitarian work hats like the fireman's helmet and the cowboy Stetson.[80]

Come in here, all you good shopping folk

And see if my work pleases you.

Made from good wool, clean, not [manky],

Well-beaten, [fulled] and felted,

Also nicely formed and shaped,

A moulded hat and also treated with [tar].

I also make lots of felt stockings

For when the cold winter comes.

Figure 8: A woodcut with caption of German hatters with woollen, thrummed hats being hand-fulled, beaten with a stick, and loose ends cleaned up with scissors, c. 1568.[81]

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backing, stringed musical instruments and confectionary glazes (*Shellac*, 1956, republished 1965, Angelo Brothers Limited, Cossipore, Calcutta; *Proofing Information Sheet*, Stockport Hat Works Museum, 2008).

[78] Phillip Stubbes, *Anatomy of the Abuses in England in Shakspere's Youth, AD 1583*, Part 1, edited Frederick J Furnivall (London, New Shakspere Society 1877-9), pp. 50-51. Appendix 4: *Stubbes' Anatomy*.

[79] Murray G Lawson, 'Fur: A Study in English Mercantilism 1700-1775', Vol. IX, *University of Toronto Studies, History and Economics Series*, 1943, pp. 4-5. The accession of the Stuarts, the execution of Charles I, and the formation of the Puritan Commonwealth, the Restoration, the Glorious Revolution, and the French Revolution 'all heralded new fashions in hat styles'.

[80] Clifford Cross, *William Plant, Maker of Wood Blocks and Frames for Ladies' and Men's Hats* (Stockport Museums and Art Gallery Service, 1977).

[81] Jost Amman and Hans Sachs, 'Der Hüter', *The Book of Trades (Ständebuch)* (1568, reprint New York, Dover Publications 1973), p. 57.

One other felted hat, common in sixteenth-century England was the *thrombed* hat with a shaggy finish of loose fibre ends.[82] These hats were mainly discarded for finer felts after the 1560s.[83]

Conclusions

Cap manufacturing in sixteenth-century Bristol employed the principal techniques of Andalusia and Tunis. The 'new idea' of making the felt first was a simple but important departure resulting in a product that could be fashioned. The process would be as immediately recognisable to feltmakers on the Mongolian Steppes as to cottage workers in Gloucestershire in the nineteenth century. In hatmaking, it became a complex and skilled craft. Adam Smith took the eighteen processes used in the 'very trifling manufacture' of the common pin to discuss the division of labour.[84] From raw material to finished felt hat over one hundred separate operations are required'.[85]

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[82] See later discussion on the establishment of the hat trade in Norwich. John Stow, continued Edmund Howes, *Annales or A General Chronicle of England* (London, 1631), pp. 869-70; also cited in Francis Edwards, *A History of English Dress; or Fashions Past and Present*, undated (Kessinger, reprint 2007), p. 19.

[83] Cunnington and Beard, *English Costume*, p. 214.

[84] Adam Smith, *An inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of nations* (1776, reprint Wilder 2008), Vol. 1, p. 9.

[85] Penny McKnight, *Stockport Hatting* (Stockport MBC, Community Services Division 2000), p. 1. There are a number of descriptions of the hat body making process used by the feltmakers to prepare basic hoods for the finishers and their fashions. There is no one single authority among these descriptions; all are correct and most are different as to the number of stages and their order. See *Universal Magazine*, 4/1750, reprinted *HG*, 2/7/1888, pp. 366-367; Denis Diderot, *Recueil de Planches sur Les Sciences, Les Arts Libéraux, et Les Arts Méchaniques, avec leur explication* (Paris, 1753); M Abbé J Nollet, *L'Art de Faire des Chapeux* (Paris 1765); Thomas Martin, *The Circle of the Mechanical Arts* (London, Richard Rees 1813); Pufpaff, *Manuals*; Dodd, 'Hat-Factory'; Charles Knight, *The Pictorial Gallery of Arts*, Vol. 1, 'Useful Arts' (London, George Cox 1847); Hawkins, *Feltmakers*, pp. 11-25; Leonard Everett Fisher, *The Hatters* (New York, Franklin Watts 1965). Making a felt hat in eighteenth-century France involved three dozen processes, all performed by workers in the same place; manuals from England and America split these into over sixty individual steps (Michael Sonenscher, *The Hatters of Eighteenth-Century France*, University of California, 1987), pp. 20-25. Appendix 5: *Felt hat manufacture, 1750.*

The rapid growth in the felt hat business after 1600 is explained in part by the gradual relaxation of Tudor sumptuary control, first by proclamation in 1574, and then by repeal in 1604.[86] Improvements in manufacture in Elizabeth's reign made big felt hats popular among the monied in place of the knitted or woven cap, and a fine and expensive hat-band and feather would set the hat to advantage.[87] Fashion among the wealthy was quickly copied or became aspirational for the coming-well-to-do.[88] The felt hat remained a preoccupation of Government as a protected trade item and as a source of revenue.

This thesis looks next in two chapters at the beginnings of the industry, first in Bristol, and then in the villages. In the two following chapters, the development of the trade in the city and its domestic business, and in its overseas trade, are examined. Next, four chapters discuss the differences that distinguished the villages, and the three great influences on the country feltmakers, their two religions, Trade Unionism and Methodism, and the arrival of the London hat manufacturers. The thesis ends with a drawing together of the various threads in a description of the industry's decline. Each chapter ends with a short section on conclusions.

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[86] Negley B Harte, 'State Control of Dress and Social Change in Pre-Industrial England', Chapter 8 in *Trade, Government and Economy in Pre-Industrial England, Essays Presented to FJ Fisher*, edited D C Coleman and A H John (London, Weidenfeld & Nicholson 1976).

[87] Dorothy Davis, *A History of Shopping* (London, Routledge & Keegan Paul 1966), pp. 112, 240. Thomas Dekker, *The Gull's Handbook, Stultorum plena sunt omnia. Al savio mezza parola basta* (London 1609, reprint Bristol, Dutch 1812), p. 149.

[88] Colin Campbell, 'Understanding traditional and modern patterns of consumption in eighteenth-century England: a character-action approach', Chapter 3, in John Brewer and Roy Porter, edited, *Consumption and the World of Goods* (London, Routledge 1993), p. 40. The population of 2.98 million in 1561 had grown to over four million by 1601 and reached 5.23 million in 1651, an overall increase of 75 percent (Keith Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities: Economic Lives in Early Modern Britain, 1470-1750* (Yale University Press, 2000), p. 159.

2 Beginnings: Bristol to 1600

This chapter seeks a coherent explanation for the arrival in Bristol of the felt hat business through an examination of the city's records before 1600, supported by data from others towns in provincial England and from the capital.

Beaver hats were imported from the continent into London from at least the fourteenth century. Chaucer wrote about 1387 of the merchant's 'Flaundryssh bever hat'.[1] This trade became a considerable business. 'These thei call Bever hattes of xx, xxx or xl shillings price fetched from beyond the seas, from whence a greate sorte of other varieties doe come besides'.[2] In one month at the end of 1514, John Henry, attending the court of Henry VIII 'with haberdash wares', was given a licence to import 500 dozen caps and 100 dozen hats from foreign parts; Roger Dele, draper, was allowed further caps and hats. Three other men received a five-year licence to 'import hats and caps of all colours from Milan, France and Flanders'.[3]

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[1] Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*, edited Nevill Coghill (London, Penguin revised 1958), Prologue A/10/24. The earliest painting in England depicting a felt hat is probably the *Marriage of Giovanni Arnoldfini* by Jan Van Eyck, 1434 (The National Gallery, NG 186), cited in Christie-Miller, *Feltmakers*, p. 27. When Charles VII of France made his triumphant entry into Rouen in 1449, he wore a felt hat lined with red silk and with plumes of feathers to the 'astonishment' of onlookers (Thomas Martin, *The Circle of the Mechanical Arts*, London, Richard Rees 1813), p. 400; (*The Hatmaker's Manual*, unattributed, 1829, in Pufpaff, *Manuals*), pp. 86-87.

[2] Stubbes, *Anatomy*, pp. 50-51.

[3] John Gostwik, John Uvedale and Stephen Hudson, December 1514, 26-30 (*Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic*, Henry VIII, Vol. 1: 1509-1514, 1920), pp. 1485-1503, available www.british-history.ac.uk, accessed 2009.

Tudor projects and their drive for local manufacture lay behind much of England's business development in the mid-sixteenth century.[4] The projects provided a loose structure for the introduction of new skills in mining, weaving, hatmaking, dyeing, and other industries. F J Fisher thought the 'most obvious characteristics of the 'fifties were an outburst of economic nationalism aimed at maximising the Englishman's share of such trade as there was and a crop of restrictions designed to protect certain vested interests'.[5] For George Unwin, the hatters' historian, the alien immigrants of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries supplied the 'main factor in an industrial renaissance which had as much importance for the economic development of England as the literary and artistic renaissance had for its intellectual development.[6] All branches of industry were affected by it; old handicrafts were revolutionized, new ones were created'.[7] Daniel Defoe, later, viewed the 'honest' projector as

> having by fair and plain principles of sense, honesty, ingenuity brought any contrivance to a suitable perfection, makes out what he pretends to, picks nobody's pocket, puts his project in execution, and contents himself with the real produce as the profit of his invention.[8]

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[4] Thirsk, *Policy*; John U Neff, *Industry and Government in France and England 1540-1640* (1940, reprint New York, Great Seal 1962), pp. 25-57; D C Coleman, *The Economy of England 1450-1750* (OUP 1977).

[5] F J Fisher, 'Commercial Trends and Policy in Sixteenth-Century England', *The Economic History Review*, Vol. 10, No. 2, November 1940, pp. 95-117.

[6] George Unwin, *The Gilds and Companies of London* (London, Methuen 1908), p. 246. One early Spanish hatmaker, Frauncis Fardinando, is recorded arriving in London in 1543 (R E G & Ernest F Kirk, edited, *Returns of Aliens dwelling in the City and Suburbs of London from the Reign of Henry VIII to that of James 1*, Vol. X, Part 1, 1523-1571 (Aberdeen, The Huguenot Society of London 1900 and 1902), p. 450.

[7] A study of the writings of J S Burn, F W Cross, W Cunningham, E Lipson, and S Smiles about the period supported this view (Lien Bich Luu, *Immigrants and the Industries of London 1500-1700*, Aldershot, Ashgate 2005), pp. 4-5.

[8] Daniel Defoe, *An Essay Upon Projects* (London 1697, reprint Rockville, Maryland, USA, Manor 2008), p. 28. Concern for the abstract ideal of *commonweal* 'switched to more material concerns'. Everyone with a scheme (a 'projector'), 'whether to make money, to employ the

Political writers identified many goods, including felt hats which were better 'to be wrought within this Realme which heretofore were wont to be brought from other countries'.[9] Sir Thomas Smith in 1549 included headwear in a list of unnecessary imports. A 'doctor' tells of the last twenty years

> when there weare not of these haberdashers that sell french or millan cappes, glasses, Daggers, swerdes, gridles and such things, not a dossen in all London, And now from the towere to Westminster alonge, euerie streat is full of them; and theire shoppes glisters... and make and die carsies, fresadowes, brodeclothes, and cappes, beyond the seaze, and bring them hether to be solde againe[10]

and expresses his low view of 'all mercers, grocers, vinteners, haberdashers, mileyners, and such as doe sell wares goinge beyond the seas, and doe fetche oute oure treasure of the same'.[11] In 1555, hats worth £7,915 10s were imported through London providing more ammunition for home manufacture.[12] A Government response, in 1563, placed a general prohibition upon 'all that foreign haberdashery against which the pamphleteers had been railing for a

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poor, or to explore the far corners of the earth' had a 'project' which was 'capable of being realised through industry and ingenuity' (Thirsk, *Policy*), p. 1. Compare a later view, '[The projector's] curse was to try and apply their theories in practice prematurely and thus bring themselves and others to disaster' (Thomas Brugis, *The Discovery of a Projector*, 1641, cited in C H Wilson, *England's Apprenticeship 1603-1763*, Harlow, Longman 1965), p. 7.

[9] 'Policies to Reduce this Realme of Englande unto a Prosperus Wealthe and Estate', 1549, in R H Tawney and Eileen Power, edited, *Tudor Economic Documents being select documents illustrating the economic and social history of Tudor England*, Vol. 3 (London, Longmans, Green 1924, reissue 1953), No. 2, pp. 311-345, from Goldsmiths' Library, UCL, MS No. 10. Hats are specified in a list, p. 331. Thirsk, *Policy*, pp. 2-3.

[10] Sir Thomas Smith, *A Discourse of the Common Weal of this Realm of England*, edited Elizabeth Lamond (Cambridge 1954), pp. 64-65. Also Thirsk, *Policy*, pp. 13-16. Fashionable Milan caps and, particularly, ladies' hats provided the English word 'millinery'.

[11] Smith, *Discourse*, p. 91.

[12] 'The Particular Value of certain necessities and unnecessary wares brought into the Port of London in the second year of the Queen Majesty's reign ...' (TNA, *State Papers Domestic*, Elizabeth, 12/8, No. 31). Also Thirsk, *Policy*, Appendix 1, p. 181; Stone, 'Overseas Trade', pp. 36-57.

generation'.[13] The development of a native felt hat industry, therefore, qualified as 'one of the deliberate projects of the Tudor policy to foster industry' with hatmakers from Flanders and Normandy encouraged to cross the channel.[14]

There is reasonable concurrence in secondary literature on the date of arrival through London of the felt hat industry in England. London might be expected to stand first as an entry point because of its 'wealth, dignity and commercial pre-eminence [which] outstripped its competitors' among English towns.[15] Howes, in his continuation of Stow's contemporary *Chronicle* said that 'about the beginning of Henry VIII [c. 1500] was begun the making of Spanish felts in England by Spaniards and Dutchmen; before which time, and long since, the English [vied] to ride and goe, winter and summer, in knit caps, cloth hoods, and the best sort in fine thromb'd hats'.[16] Smiles described the arrival in London, about 1500, of skilled workers from Spain, Flanders, and from Paris, Lyons, Rouen and the French coast around La Rochelle.[17] He gave a firm

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[13] In 1563, a long list of goods (but not hats or caps) was banned from importation into England (*Act for avoiding of dyvers forreyne wares made by handye craftsman beyond the seas*, 5 Elizabeth, c. 7). Fisher, 'Commercial Trends', pp. 107-108.

[14] Also, 'no smale sum of money that is bestowed yerely in Flaunders coloured cloth, in French dyed cappis, in hattis, and Spaynishe feltis, only to be worne in Englande (setting a worke all nations, but ours kepyng in ydlenes)' (*The Request and Suite of a True-Hearted Englishman*, written by 'William Cholmeley, Londyner, in the year 1553', edited W J Thoms, Camden Society, Old Series, Vol. 55, 1853), pp. 1-25, reprinted Tawney and Power, *Tudor Economic Documents*, p. 142. Corner, 'Tyranny', p. 154. Samuel Smiles, *The Huguenots: Their Settlements, Churches, and Industries in England and Ireland* (London, Murray 1870), pp. 1-20.

[15] E Lipson, *The Economic History Of England*, Vol. 1, p. 336.

[16] Stow, *Annales*, pp. 869-70; also cited in Edwards, *English Dress*, p. 19.

[17] Smiles, *Huguenots*, p. 253. Charles M Weiss, *History of the French Protestant Refugees from the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes to the present time*, Vol. 1 (New York, Stringer & Townsend 1854), p. 290 and, with more detail, p. 300.

date for the start of hatmaking of 1524.[18] Unwin based his view on the first manufacture of the felt hat in England on a 'curious' device at the top of a hatters' trade union communication.[19] Around this device were printed traditional or historic data including 'Hats first invented, 1456; first made in London, 1510'.[20]

To compare the date of arrival of the felt hat trade in Bristol and provincial England with that of London, a wide range of sixteenth and seventeenth nominal and occupational records were examined for mentions of hatmakers and feltmakers.[21] Collated by county, this list shows that substantial felt hatmaking was established nationally within a decade each side of 1550. Three areas, Cheshire and Lancashire, Gloucestershire, and Exeter, continued dominant into the seventeenth century while early strength in Norwich and York fell away after 1600.[22] These records concentrate on the major cities, but also show that feltmaking grew rapidly in the villages south of Manchester by 1600 and this resonates with the Gloucestershire villages.[23]

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[18] Smiles, *Huguenots*, pp. 1-20.
[19] Unwin, 'Trade Union', pp. 394-396.
[20] The trade union was the *Fair Trade*, the feltmakers' London combination with antecedents into the seventeenth century.
[21] Although necessarily selective, uneven, and incomplete, this list of 1,840 names, compiled privately by Harry Duckworth (University of Manitoba, 2010) is more than adequate for the graphical interpretation and analysis produced here. The compilation was made from a 'great variety of sources', including lists of freemen, apprenticeships, printed parish records which include occupations, calendars of wills, and a broad based internet search using mainly record office, historical document collections, and electronically published book web sites. With due caution, Duckworth found that the 'published information on the distribution of feltmaking in England was very impressionistic, and sometimes quite misleading'.
[22] In 1604 a copy of the renewed act of 8 Elizabeth, c. 11 (1561) was sent to the major cap and hat making towns: London, Norwich, Exeter, Southwark, Coventry, Bristol, York, Worcester, Shrewsbury, Lincoln, Bewdley, Isam and Quinborough, Kent.
[23] Discussed in Chapter 3: *The villages to 1700.*

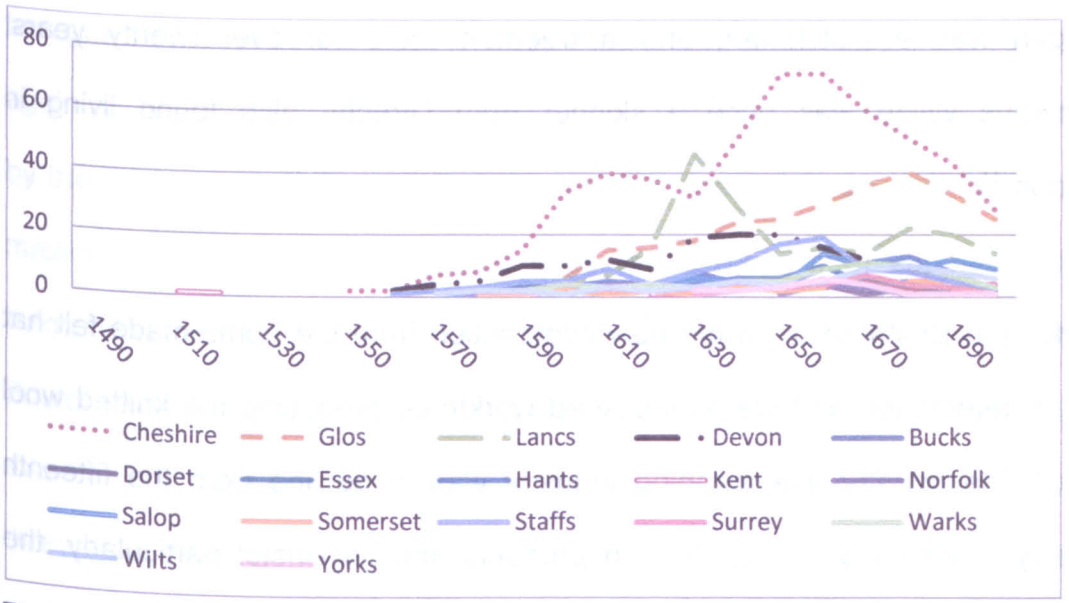

Figure 9: Decennial hatmaker and feltmaker mentions by county, 1490-1700.

There is one important caveat to a substantial felt hat introduction around 1550: there were pockets of felt hat makers in London and around the country from much earlier times.[24] The records are murky. A hatmaker used many materials before felt; felt had been in use for thousands of years for many different purposes other than for hats. For instance, the alien subsidy rolls of London in 1483 lists thirty cappers and eighteen hatmakers and hatters, the latter all of German origin, but without mention of any use of felt.[25] However, these isolated felt and hat references do not yet have an answer: Exeter in 1526 (earlier than Bristol), Canterbury and Chester 1507, Coventry 1494, Nottingham 1478, and, earliest, York in the 1460s were, perhaps, skilled immigrants.[26] Among the three early makers in York, for instance, John

[24] Richard Thedr, feltrarius, alderman, London, 1180 (Pipe Rolls, *The Publications of the Pipe Roll Society*, Vol. XXIX, 1908), p. 154.
[25] J L Bolton, edited, *The Alien Communities of London in the Fifteenth Century: The Subsidy Rolls of 1440 and 1483-4* (Stamford, Richard III and Yorkist History Trust 1998), p. 19, and throughout.
[26] Three 'felthatmakers' at York: Nicholaus Wilde, Johannes Morgan, and Petrus Knyfe ('Admissions to the Freedom of York': Temp. Edward IV, 1461-83, Register of the Freemen of

Morgan was a Dutchman, and a freeman there for over twenty years; Nicholaus Wilde was once a skinner from Utrecht, also found living in London.[27]

Working in Bristol to repel the new competition from the home-made felt hat was a determined and well-established workforce producing the knitted wool cap.[28] The country-wide capping industry was in decline from the fifteenth century, troubled by cheap foreign products and, in Bristol particularly, the regionally produced Monmouth cap.[29]

The nation's cappers regularly received Government protection. An act of 1488-89 determined to make the best overseas wares unprofitable by setting maximum prices of 20d for hats and 2s 8d for caps.[30] Five further statutes designed to safeguard the industry were passed in the sixteenth century.[31]

By 1512, all hat and cap imports were banned except when bought by those of the rank of knight and above – 'no caps hats ready wrought should be

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the City of York: Vol. 1: 1272-1558, 1897), pp. 181-206 (available british-history.ac.uk; accessed 11/2011).

[27] L C Attreed, edited, *The York House Books, 1461-1490* (Stroud, Sutton, Richard III and Yorkist History Trust 1991), pp. 32-33. Bolton, *Alien Communities*, pp. 27, 37, 42, 56, 72.

[28] Appendix 6: *Petitions of the cap and hat makers, 1531*. For background on the capping industry, Charles Phythian-Adams, *Desolation of a City: Coventry and the Urban Crisis of the Late Middle Ages* (CUP 1979). The earliest reference to the cappers, making wool-knit caps, is a set of ordinances in London dated 1258 (Sharpe, *Letter-Books*, D 271, fn. cxxxix, cited in Giles, 'Felt-Hatting'), p. 104.

[29] Established in 1269 [in London], cappers produced fulled felt knitted caps that hugged the head by 'thicking', 'dressing' and 'walking' (Sharpe, Letter-Books, D), p. 271.

[30] 4 Henry VII, c. 9 (1488-1489) 'for the prices of hats and caps'.

[31] 3 Henry VIII, c. 15; 21 Henry VIII, c. 9; 1 Mary, c. 4; 8 Elizabeth, c. 11; 13 Elizabeth, c. 19. Also Harte, 'State Control', pp. 137-139.

brought from beyond the seas'.[32] In 1529 and 1530, the cappers complained again about French caps and hats being sold cheaper than could be managed by the home trade.[33] They called successfully for legislation that set a lower maximum price for these imports, caps at no more than 2s, hats 5d, or coloured or white caps at 6d, thus eating into profits.[34] The following year, Bristol's cap and hatmakers combined to petition the King that this last act was being flouted by chapmen from London selling French goods that were threatening 'utter desolation' to the city's 'poore people [*] and [*] which geteth their moost lyvyng only by makyng of the saide [*] cappes and hatts [*] carders, spynners knytters [*] dressers, Syeves and [*] of Cappes'.[35] The Bristol petition of 1531 was one of a series of eight from different towns, all similarly worded, which showed an impressive degree of co-operation by Severn valley capmakers.[36]

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[32] An Act agaynst wearing of costly Apparrell, 1 Henry VIII, c. 14 (1510); re-enactment with adjustments 3 Henry VIII, c. 15 (1511-1512); re-enactment with adjustments, 6 Henry VIII, c. 1 (1516). These acts were amended in 1533 by An Act for Reformacyon of Excesse in Apparayle (24 Henry VIII, c. 13), pp. 430-432, which extended the hierarchy of restriction to 'servingmen and other yeomen taking wages', husbandmen and 'servingmen in husbandry or journeymen in handicrafts taking wages' (Harte, 'State Control'), pp. 136-137; (Wilfrid Hooper, 'The Tudor Sumptuary Laws', *English History Review*, Vol. 30, No.119, July 1915), pp. 433-434. These provisions, therefore, extended to hatter journeymen and their own wearing of the hats they made.

[33] *Select Pleas in the Star Chamber*, Vol ii, 252,261 seq., cited in Lipson, *Economic History*, Vol. 1, p. 236.

[34] 21 Henry VIII, c. 9 (1530). This act appears lost, but its content can be deduced from subsequent petitions. It seems very similar to 4 Henry VII, c. 9 (1488).

[35] Appendix 6: *Petitions of the cap and hat makers, 1531*. [*] indicates an unreadable word.

[36] Only three are dated, those of Shrewsbury and Bridgnorth in January, and Bristol in February. The others, from Borough, south of the Thames; Bewdley; Gloucester; Stafford; and Lichfield are assumed to be from 1531 because of the subject consistency. In the earlier sixteenth century the successful cappers John Falconer and Sir Thomas Bell kept 'great numbers of people at work on spinning and knitting of caps' (TNA, E 134/25, Eliz. I Hil./3, cited in 'Early Modern Gloucester: Population and economic development to 1640', *A History of the County of Gloucester*: Vol. 4: 'The City of Gloucester', 1988, pp. 75-76, available www.british-history.ac.uk, accessed 2009).

Thirty years later, while the threat of imports remained, the new felt hat had begun to displace the knitted cap. An act of 1565 recognised that 'great multitudes' of English woollen cappers were 'impoverished and decayed by the excessive use of hats and felts, and thereby divers good cities and towns brought to desolation'.[37] In 1571, all males over six years were required to 'wear upon the Sabbath and Holydays, one cap of wool knit, thicked and dressed in England' against a fine of 3s 4d; wives had to wear 'white knit caps of woolen yarn, unless their husbands were of good value in the Queen's book or could prove themselves gentlemen by descent'.[38] This 'Statute Cap' was much derided.[39] However, as peers, the wealthy, and gentlemen of high city office were excluded, one effect was to reinforce the status of the felted beaver hat among the higher orders.[40]

Bristol's native cappers and hatters faced additional competition from popular Monmouth caps.[41] These caps, whose characteristics are unsure, were produced by a cottage industry spread over twenty-seven towns and villages from Monmouth to Shrewsbury, and centred on Ludlow.[42] Bristol, serviced by

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[37] See Peter King, *The Mystery of The Coventry Cappers* (London 2000).
[38] 13 Elizabeth c. 19. An enforcing proclamation was issued in 1573 (Larkin & Hughes, *Tudor Royal Proclamations*), Vol. 2, pp. 369-370. The act was repealed in 1597 (Harte, 'State Control').
[39] Shakespeare's Rosaline satirises the courtiers with 'better wits have worn plain statute caps' (*Loves Labour's Lost*, Act V, Scene II).
[40] Ian W Archer, *The History of the Haberdashers' Company* (Chichester, 1991), p. 59. Hooper, 'Sumptuary Laws', pp. 433-49; Harte, 'State Control'.
[41] 'The art of felt-making in England is of no very long standing: for in less than one hundred years, the manufacture instead of it was capping, or making of bonnets and *Monmouthcaps* ('Appendix: Undated documents, 1689-1702', *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: William III, 1700-1702*, 1937), pp. 535-612, available www.british-history.ac.uk, accessed 2007.
[42] Shakespeare claimed, through Captain Fluellen, that Welshmen wore leeks in their Monmouth Caps at the battle of Agincourt, 1599 (*Henry V*, Act 4, Scene 7). Fluellen is 'referring to the Welshmen in the service of the Black Prince at Crécy in 1346' (Kirstie

the trows of the Rivers Wye and Severn, was the natural port of export and this, in part, explains the Monmouth cap's 'surprising worldwide distribution'.[43]

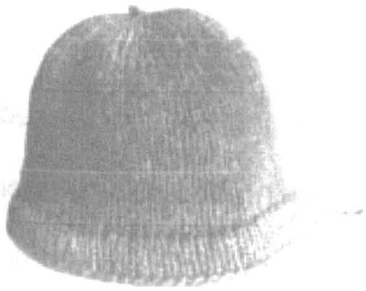

Figure 10: Possible knitted Monmouth cap in the Monmouth Local History Collection.[44]

French and Flemish hatters and feltmakers settled early in London, including a large body of Rouen feltmakers in London in 1524.[45] There is no description of the arrival of any foreign feltmakers in sixteenth-century Bristol, but there is a comprehensive record for the establishment of the industry in Norwich in 1540, the two then comprising the 'chief cities' after London.[46] In Norwich, the

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Buckland, 'The Monmouth Cap', *Costume,* Vol. 13, 1979, reprint), p. 2. Henry V was born in Monmouth. A Thomas Capper was in the retinue of the Duke of Gloucester at Agincourt (Sir Nicholas Harris Nicolas, *History of the Battle of Agincourt, and of the Expedition of Henry V into France, in 1415. The Roll of the Men at Arms in the English Army*, London, 1833; reprint London, Muller 1971), p. 335.

[43] Buckland, 'Monmouth Cap', pp. 3-7. In 1576, the Council of Marches decreed that persons not wearing a cap be sought out and their forfeitures distributed among the poor cappers of twenty-seven towns, including Monmouth and Bewdley (Ralph Flenley, *Calendar of the Register of the Queen's Majesty's Council in the Dominion and Principality of Wales and the Marches of the Same, 1569-1591*, London, The Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion, 1916). Thirty-six dozen Monmouth caps in two qualities, costing £40 16s, between 20-26d each, were taken by Drake and Hawkins to the West Indies in 1596 (Kenneth R Andrews, editor, *The Last Voyage of Drake and Hawkins*, Cambridge, Hakluyt Society, 1972), p. 66.

[44] This claim from Monmouth is disputed by Stuart Peachey of Historical Management Associates, whose organisation is in the middle of a five-year project to validate and reclassify some 25,000 clothing illustrations dating between 1558-1660. 'Much of what has previously been accepted [including by us] as valid images have been shown to be suspect or simply wrong, including some showing what appear to be felt hats' (Peachey, conversation 2011).

[45] Karen Finch, 'A Medieval Hat Rediscovered', *Textile History*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 1983, pp. 67-70. Weinstein, *Feltmakers*, p. 6.

[46] Norwich Record Office, No. CCCCLV, *Muniment Book*, Preamble, NCR Case 10b. Also Rev. William Hudson and John Cottingham Tingey, *Selected Records of the City of Norwich*,

market opportunity was grasped by local traders, who relied on feltmakers from France and Flanders to provide the manufacturing skills. Norwich, as an example of what happened at Bristol, is examined in detail.

In the 'reign of Henry VIII, the fashion for wearing felt hats greatly increased, and a few enterprising citizens of [Norwich] saw the opening and seized upon it with conspicuous success'.[47] These 'honest' hatters and feltmakers [although never called such, always of the *occupacion*], claimed in 1543 to have 'inuentyd and begune the craft of hattes makyng w^t^in whiche they can now make as well and good as ever came oute of Fraunce or Flaunders'.[48]

Hatmakers moved quickly to control entry to, and standards of, their 'fellowship' by developing a set of municipal regulations, backed by fines, to protect their trade against 'diuers covetous and forward persons ... more regarding their owne priuate lucre, gotten by deceipte and untrowth'. The legitimate trade in Norwich, they claimed, was threatened by hats 'so unworkmanly and w^t^ suche unlawfull and deciptfull stuffe, as w^t^ hear, sterche and syse, that suche persons as haue worne and occupied the same deciptfull hattes and haue ben deceyuid w^t^ them, do now uniuersally suspecte

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Vol. 2 (Norwich, Jarrold 1910), pp. 381-382, with transcript in *HG*, 1906, 1/5, pp. 258-259, 2/6, pp. 314-315, 2/7, pp. 371-372, 1/8, p. 427. Appendix 7: *The Ancient Hat Trade of Norwich, 1543.*

[47] Hudson and Tingey, *Selected Records*, pp. lxxii-lxxv.

[48] The reference to 'France and Flanders' was crossed out and replaced by 'any other realm'.

all hattes made in [the city] to be deceyptfull'.[49] This introduction of an unnatural civic monopoly for hatmaking was repeated in Bristol.[50]

Four particular rules, among many more, show the newness of the Norwich trade and its origins. First, apprenticeship was not compulsory, but no person or persons 'nether jorneymen or apprentyses' could make felt hats in the city without declaring themselves to the Mayor and within 'two or three days' before 'two or thre perfyte artyfycers ... make thre hatte feltez of iij [3] sundry facons w^t^oute helpe or counsell of any person or persons from the begynnyng to the ende and fynisshyng therof'. Norwich craftsmen were still open to and expected growth from outside their own establishments because of the ease of importing the new skill. Second, the craftsmen consistently referred to both 'hatte feltes and hattes', suggesting that, in 1543, the new felts were made alongside older hats. The difference may lie in a description of making procedures which includes 'euery Hatte felte aswell bare feltes as thrummyd feltes shalbe evinly made and well and sufficiently wrought both harde and stronge, and of conuenyent largeness and bignes'. The craft framed regulations to protect their monopoly and reputation in making both new felt hats and the old thrummed hats of the hurers. Third, the trade was influenced by European standards in their wool specification. City craftsmen were forbidden to make 'any hatte felt of any kynde of beastes hear or flok, or of any other thing but of estriche wolle only, or of estriche wolle and englysshe wolle sufficiently mixed together'. The origin of Estridge wool is disputed, but it

[49] Hair, starch and size.
[50] The Bristol monopoly is discussed in Chapter 4: *Monopolies, 1550-1855.*

is certainly not English. Textile historians make various claims from Austria to central Europe and the Mediterranean.[51] However, timber specialists describe Estrich boards as from the Baltic, and Estonia in particular.[52] Fourth, the ordinances required each hatter to 'sette his particuler marke w^{t} a bronde of Iron uppon euery hatte felt and hatte made by hym self or by any other person to his use immedyatly after euery suche felte or hatte be fully wrought and fynysshed uppon peyne to forfeyt'.

At the end of the ordinances the names of seventeen hatters and their marks are listed.[53] Tingey noted that 'one or more [of them] have been struck through, and since the date affixed [to them] is only one month previous to the issue of the orders one feels certain that these are the names and marks of the original founders of the company'.[54] All of these men have been traced in the Old Free Book of Norwich and six took up their freedom as cappers or hatters about the date of the ordinances.[55] William Hede may have been the senior member, admitted as a capper in 1513, and the 'remainder were a

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[51] Central Europe, [estrige wul; estridge wul; estridge wooll; estridg woole]; probably a corruption of 'Oesterreich' or Austrian wool (Eric Kerridge, *Textile Manufacturers in Early Modern England*, Manchester University Press 1985), pp. 1-13. J Smith, *Practice of Customs*, suggests that the wool was 'usually imported from Germany, the Levant, Italy, and other parts of the Mediterranean'. Estridge wool from Austria (Nancy Cox and Karin Dannehl, *Dictionary of Traded Goods and Commodities, 1550-1820*, University of Wolverhampton, 2007). 'Estridge French wool' (*Feltmaker petition*, 1579, BL, Lansdowne MS, 28:71).

[52] Tomasz Wazny, 'The origin, assortments and transport of Baltic timber', in Carl Van de Velde, Hans Beeckman, Joris Van Acker and Frans Verhaeghe, editors, symposium, *Constructing Wooden Images* (Brussels University Press 2002). The boards were used for the rebuilding of Norwich Guildhall in 1411-1413 (Richard Howlett, 'A Fabric Roll of the Norwich Guildhall, 1410-11', *Norfolk Archaeology*, Vol.15, 1904), pp. 174-89.

[53] Norwich Court Book, No. CCCCLV. Appendix 8: *The marks and names of the hat-makers of Norwich, 1543.*

[54] Hudson and Tingey, *Selected Records*, Vol. 2, p. lxxxiv.

[55] Freemen's Roll 1, 'Old Free Book' referred to as 'Liber Introitus Civium' 1317-1549 (Norfolk Record Office, NCR Case 17c).

scratch lot who had been practising various trades – draper, parchment-maker, barber and grocer - before taking up that of hatmaking'. George Drory was the senior capper, taking his freedom in 1538; he was 'also described as an alien and one naturally has a suspicion [without proof] that he introduced felt making'.[56]

In 1542, because of the war with Scotland and France, all individuals of either nationality living in Norwich were recorded.[57] The list contains sixteen Frenchmen and, says Tingey, 'certainly six, with a doubtful seventh who was also a hatter, who were even then in the employ of the members of the future company'. The war would 'necessarily have given a stimulus to home manufacture'.[58]

This example from Norwich provides a likely scenario for Bristol: there is no evidence that the arrival of felt hat making in one town should be different from the arrival in the other. A small group that carried all of the techniques and money necessary to set up the industry within city walls seems unlikely. As in Norwich, craftsmen introducing a radically new product needed local entrepreneurs to provide funding and a commercial umbrella. There were about forty Bristol tradesmen who were willing to take the risk and to

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[56] Hudson and Tingey, *Selected Records*, Vol. 2, p. lxxxiv.
[57] Norwich Record Office, No. CCLXXXIX, Convocation of Aldermen on Saturday 2/9/1542, *Muniment Book*, Preamble, NCR Case 10b.
[58] Frenchmen: Peter Oreng, servant of Robert Hendry, hatter; John Glasier, hatter, servant of Ralph Marssham, Stephen Reinbald is surety; Andrew Tiphany, hatter, servant of William Hede, James Roberdes is surety; Nicholas Tiphany, servant of Robert Hendry, the same James is surety; John Jeuort, hatter, servant of Henry Holand, the same Henry is surety (Hudson and Tingey, *Selected Records of the City of Norwich*), Vol. 2, p. 170.

challenge the cappers.[59] Those who were successful created a feltmakers' and haberdashers' company to promote and to protect their achievement.[60] 'The feltmakers made hats, and the haberdashers sold them.'[61] Bristol's powers to cosset its merchant citizens by regulating competition in the city had been advanced by the government's drive to reinvigorate major towns.[62] The King's Treasury also established through the city council the centralised points of taxation necessary to refill the nation's war chests with revenue from the incoming projects.[63] For agreeing to become vigorous tax collectors, the Company was given the right to ply a protected civic trade. The Company bolstered the city's power, provided revenue, and helped meet the Government's financial objectives. Within five years of formation in 1595, the Company had sixty members.

Bristol's records of exports to Ireland provide evidence of felt hat manufacture between 1540-1570 when a sharp decline in cap shipments is followed by a rise in those for hats.[64] From 1541 to 1601, hats exported to Ireland averaged

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[59] BRO, 08156/1. Appendix 9: *Bristol's feltmakers and haberdashers, 1595-1600.*
[60] BRO, 08156/1.
[61] Haberdashers of hats are differentiated from haberdashers of small wares who sold needles, tapes and buttons, etc (BRO, Burgess Books, 04358-580; Rogers, *Craft Gilds*), p. 22. Also William Beck, *The Draper's Dictionary* (The Warehousemen and Drapers Journal, London, 1886); Shorter OED, Oxford 1980; but Hamilton found in a national review of haberdashers' inventories that the differentiation was seldom clear and was often a reflection of what any haberdasher had to sell (Polly Hamilton, *Haberdashery for Use in Dress 1550-1800* (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Wolverhampton, 2007), pp. 120-122.
[62] *Act to remedy the decay of corporate towns*, 1 and 2 Phillip and Mary, c. 7 (1554).
[63] D C Coleman, *Economy of England*, p. 75; *Industry in Tudor and Stuart England*, The Economic History Society (London, Macmillan 1975, reprint 1983), pp. 14-15; and *The British Paper Industry 1495-1860, A Study in Industrial Growth* (OUP 1958); J W Gough, *The Rise of the Entrepreneur* (London, Batsford 1969), pp. 233-240; Thirsk, *Policy*, pp. 159-160.
[64] One dozen felts each from Bristol on the *Trynyte* of Waterford (Susan Flavin and Evan T Jones, edited, *Bristol's Trade with Ireland and the Continent 1503-1601, The evidence of the exchequer customs accounts*, BRS, Vol. 61, 2009), p. 529. Between 1513 and 1576, caps

508 a year with parcel sizes of about fifteen. These cargoes contain shipments of *felts* as well as hats, for instance two shipments in 1546. The volume of trade suggests local manufacture.

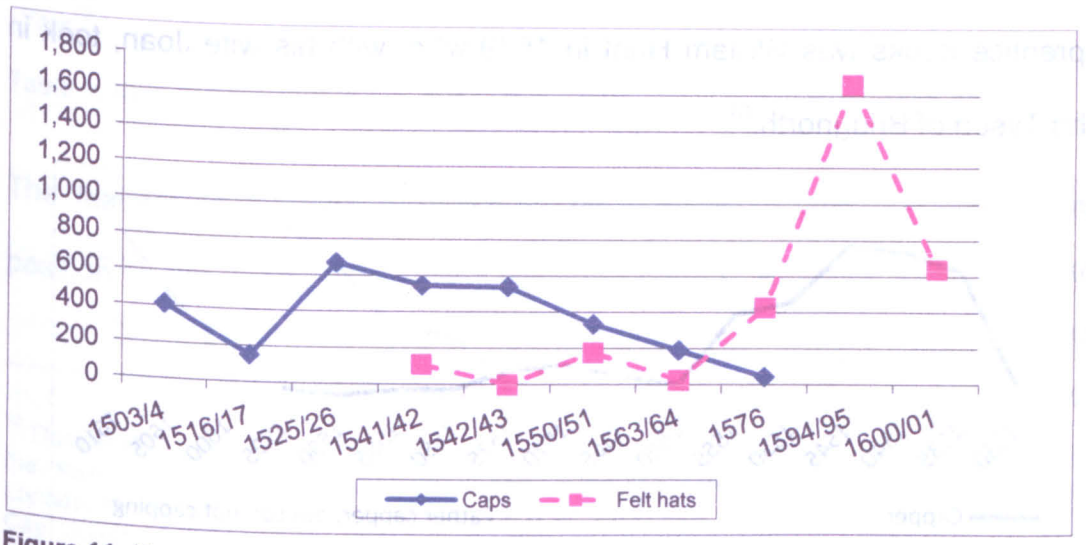

Figure 11: Numbers of caps and hats exported from Bristol to Ireland, 1503-1601.

If these felts were the first exports from local manufacture of a new hat industry, there should be corresponding evidence of the beginnings of feltmaker employment, matched by a decline in that of the wool-knit cappers. Civic apprentice registration began in Bristol in 1532.[65] From the late 1540s, boys sent to learn the trade of the cappers, and the sons of cappers sent to an alternative trade, plummeted. Between 1560-1580, there was a hiatus in the hat trade with few apprentices registered to any capper or hatter, possibly a result of the time needed for the feltmakers to achieve the civic recognition necessary to have their apprenticeships officially recorded. The first feltmaker

averaged 362 a year, about thirteen items to a parcel, suggesting trade with a single retailer. Some Monmouth caps were exported in 1600/01.

[65] The first known recognition of an apprentice in Bristol was in 1449 (*Calendar of the Bristol Apprentice Book 1532-1565* (BRS, Vol. XIV, 1532-1542, edited D Hollis, 1949), pp. 5, 22. Also Vol. XXXIII, 1542-1552, edited E Ralph & N M Hardwick, 1980; Vol. XLIII, 1552-1565, edited E Ralph, 1992); Margaret McGregor, *Bristol Apprentice Book 1566-1593*, Vol. 1, 1566-1573; Vol. 2, 1573-1579; Vol. 3, 1579-1586; Vol. 4, 1586-1593 (BAFHS 1994); 1594-1600, private.

apprentice was noted, not in the civic records, but in those of the Company. Walter Lyppett, a founder member, was apprenticed for seven years in 1572 to Thomas Printer, a hatmaker.[66] The first master feltmaker in the city's apprentice books was William Hunt in 1579 who, with his wife Joan, took in John Tyson of Bridgnorth.[67]

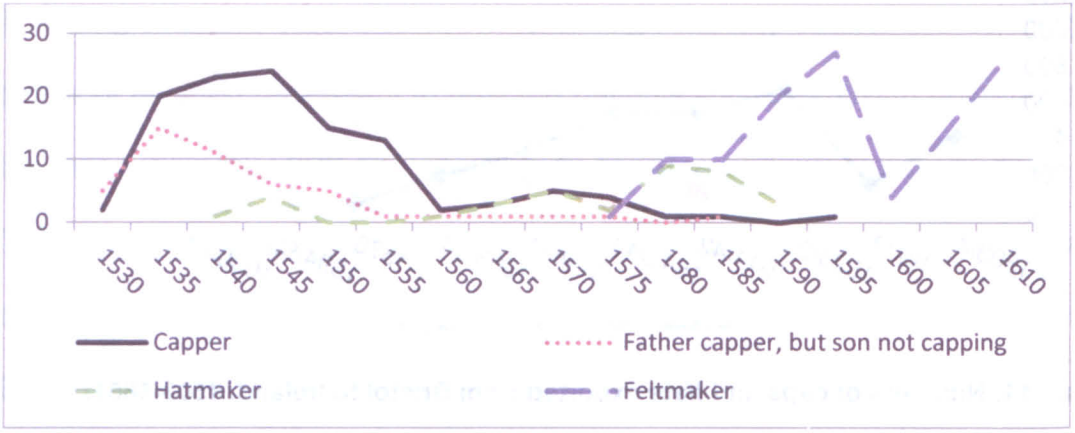

Figure 12: Bristol apprentices, 1530-1610.

Hatmaker apprentices, never large in number and whose masters may have been the city's first workers in felt, disappeared by the 1590s, when all *hatmakers* in Bristol became *feltmakers*. This sudden name shift to feltmaker is mirrored across England in Chester, Exeter, London, Norwich and York. The change was initiated by the 1565 *Act for uttering of caps, and for true making of hats and caps* which ruled that 'only felt could be used for hats'.[68] As a result, *hats* became *felts*.[69] With the extremes of York and Chester probably explained by local circumstances, Bristol's change in nomenclature, concluded in nineteen years, was, perhaps, a little slow.

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[66] BRO, 08156/1.
[67] BRO, 04352/2.
[68] 8 Elizabeth, c. 11 (1565).
[69] Weinstein, *Feltmakers*, p. 7. Harrison, *Hat*, pp. 18-27.

	First felt hatter	First feltmaker	Last hatter
Bristol	1540	1571	1590
Chester[70]	1550	c.1598	1619
Exeter[71]	1527	before 1579	1579
London[72]	1510 (1501)	1565	1585
Norwich	1540 (1474)	1543	1580
York[73]	(1401)	c.1580	1586

Table 1: Nomenclature changes: felt hatters, feltmakers and hatters, 1510-1619.[74]

The leaders of Bristol's new feltmaking industry sought to reinforce their position in the community by buying citizenship.[75] Between 1557-1600, the

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[70] Duckworth's view is that Chester was 'heavily involved in the making of felts, even before the start of the reign of Elizabeth' [1558]. *Chester Freeman Rolls* (Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, Vol. 51, Parts 1 & 2, 1906 and 1908). Also Frank Simpson, 'The City Guilds of Chester: The Skinners and Feltmakers', *Journal of the Chester and North Wales Archaeological & History Society*, Vol. XXI, 1915.

[71] Cappers, Haberdashers, and Feltmakers received a charter in Exeter in 1493 (Alexander Jenkins, *The History and Description of the City of Exeter* (Exeter, 1806), p. 90. However, more likely it was the cappers alone in 1493, amalgamating later ('The Kalendars and the Exeter Trade-Gilds' (*Report and Transactions of the Devonshire Association for the Advancement of Science, Literature and Art*, Vol. 44, 1912), p. 428. In the seventeenth-century very small quantities of hats were sent from Exeter and confirm a small, local hat industry there (W B Stephens, *Seventeenth-Century Exeter, A Study of Industrial and Commercial Development, 1625-1688*, University of Exeter 1958), p. 12.

[72] London has no surviving list of freemen until after the Restoration; there is no general list of apprentice indentures, only those maintained by individual companies, most of which begin after the sixteenth century. In the baptismal and burial registers of St Olave, Southwark, the London parish with the greatest concentration of working hatters, there is a sudden and absolute switch from 'hatmaker' to 'feltmaker' among almost 200 men between October and December 1585. The change also encompasses individual craftsmen (Harry Duckworth, *Notes on the Early History of Feltmaking in London, and the Beginnings of the Feltmakers' Company*, unpublished 2011), p. 15.

[73] In York, where, in the Freemen's Rolls from 1594-1603, the 'cappers and hatters almost vanish from the lists, feltmakers take their place, rising from nil to eighteen, while haberdashers grew from two to twenty-nine' (P M Tillott, editor, 'Tudor York: The Tudor economy and pauperism', *A History of the County of York: the City of York*, Victoria County History, 1961), pp. 122-135.

[74] The initial trade column shows the first date found for a felt hatter in each town; those bracketed dates for Norwich and York are suspect and perhaps show pre-felt hatters. The early civic and court records available at www.british-history.ac.uk, accessed 2007, show numerous examples of the use of *hatter*, from the thirteenth century. The second column dates the known arrival of the term *feltmaker* by which time the term *hatter* was already declining. *Hatter* was out of use by the date in column three. London would be expected to lead the change and does so in two ways: its first hatter in 1510 coincides with the date claimed by the hatters' union as that of the first felt hat manufacture; its first feltmaker dates from 1565, the same year as the act for the 'true making of hats'. The 1510 claim is made suspect by the combination of a group of feltmakers with the haberdashers in 1502. Chester's date for its last hatter is some thirty years later than that of the other towns and recognises a small local group holding to the old name.

cappers' burgess records show twenty-four 'freedom' events involving twenty-eight individuals in the trade. The last two cappers to gain citizenship were appointed in 1582. One of these, George Batten was apprenticed as a capper for ten years to William Buckley; Buckley switched trades by 1597 to become a felt hatmaker. Capper patronage continued to 1589 and, one of the last, William Browne, saw his son of the same name become a haberdasher of hats in 1590.[76] The feltmakers' earliest burgess, William Smitt, was appointed by redemption in 1577.[77] No further record for Smitt has been found to help place him as a foreigner or as a loosely recorded *Smith.* Were he an older man on taking citizenship, it is just possible that he was in Bristol about 1540 at the beginning of the felt hat trade. No further feltmaker burgess was elected until after 1588 when there were three more redemptions, an indication of the gradual establishment of a new trade in the city and, perhaps, the lack of willing patrons.[78] With the exception of George Griffith, who became a burgess in 1595 through marriage to the widow of fellow feltmaker Ralph Blackborne, the remaining six feltmaker burgesses before 1600 were elected after completed apprenticeships, all to masters who have no record of becoming a burgess in any trade, but may have been free before the start of the lists in 1557.[79] Ten of the fourteen burgess feltmakers became founders of the Company.

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[75] BRO, Bristol Burgess Books, 04358-59 and 04361.
[76] BRO, 08156/1.
[77] On payment of a fine of £2 16s 8d.
[78] George Davis, 1589; Nicholas Stasye, 1591; and Robert Cooper, 1592, fine £3 6s 8d. 'At Bristol ..., no stranger was to be admitted to the freedom of the city without the consent of the merchants or craftsmen in his occupation' (Lipson, *Economic History*), Vol. 1, p. 341.
[79] There were no hatmaker burgesses in the period to 1600.

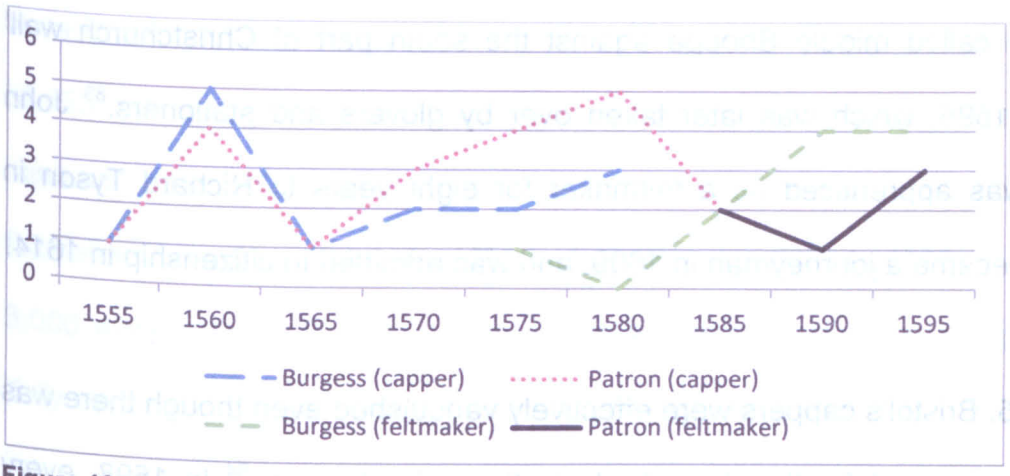

Figure 13: Appointment and patronage of feltmaker and capper burgesses, 1557-1600.

The evidence from exports, apprenticeships, and citizenship shows that the feltmakers were in existence for about fifty years before their self-interest found fruit in their Company. The first sixty members and apprentices came from fifty-one families; a number of these, like Burges, Davis and Hunte, were fathers and sons.[80] Little of substance about these pioneers can be gleaned from Bristol's archives, but there are some scraps to add to the straightforward records of trade apprenticeships and citizenships. For instance, a William Spratt leased two tenements in St Thomas Street in 1524 (probably father to the same-named feltmaker) and, in 1582 (the son), a property in St James Back; and, also in 1582, as merchant, two tenements in St Thomas Street.[81] William Wells, hatmaker, son and heir to John Wells, Bristol merchant, leased a messuage in Knifesmith Street, alias Christmas Street, to Bristol merchant Nicholas Crosbie in 1568.[82] John Burgess was a hatmaker in 1581, but became a haberdasher in 1609. Thomas Printer leased

[80] Of these sixty men, fourteen (23%) have their last entry in the company minute books in 1609. Appendix 9: *Bristol's feltmakers and haberdashers, 1595-1600.*
[81] BRO, P.St S/D/11/4, P.St S/D/10/6, P.St S/D/11/6.
[82] BRO, 4549/1-4 (2).

a 'shop called middle Shoppe against the south part of Christchurch wall' before 1595, which was later taken over by glovers and stationers.[83] John Hook was apprenticed as a feltmaker for eight years to Richard Tyson in 1598, became a journeyman in 1609, and was admitted to citizenship in 1614.

By 1575, Bristol's cappers were effectively vanquished even though there was lingering support for the dying trade in the civic chamber.[84] In 1598, every alderman and all others in 'solemn assembly' was ordered to 'weere a cappe and noe hatt, upon payne to forfeyte three shillings fower pence ... unlesse upon reasonable cause he shalbe licensed to weare his hatt'.[85]

Are there any clues as to the origins of Bristol's feltmaking skills apart from the introduction of French workers into Norwich? Several sixteenth century surveys taken in London provide the names and dates of arrival of aliens working in the early hatting and haberdashery trades near the capital. These were part of a large population, working mainly south of the River Thames, and estimated at 3,000 people in 1500, and reaching, perhaps, 6,000 strangers by the end of the reign of Henry VIII.[86] From 1523-71, 225 feltmakers and associated tradesmen were found in London of whom 48%

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[83] BRO, 26166/253.
[84] The cappers had no guild in Bristol, but could sell through the haberdashers (Rogers, *Craft Gilds*), p. 23.
[85] Stanford, *Ordinances*, fn. 67, pp. 105-106.
[86] Laura Hunt Yungblut, *Strangers Settled Here Amongst Us, Policies, perceptions and the presence of aliens in Elizabethan England* (London, Routledge 1996), p. 12, citing Sylvia L Thrupp, *The Merchant Class of Medieval London, 1330-1500* (University of Chicago Press, 1948), pp. 50-51; Sylvia Thrupp, 'A Survey of the Alien Population of England in 1440', *Speculum*, Vol. 32, No. 2, 1957, p. 267; and Andrew Pettegree, *Foreign Protestant Communities in Sixteenth-Century London* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), fn. 6, p. 78. Unwin, *Gilds*, pp. 245-247.

were Dutch and 31% French.[87] In the Borough petition of cap and hat makers of 1531, each signatory claimed a number of dependents; the whole was a minimum of 2,700 people. By 1576, there were 'above 400 native-born feltmakers in and about London'.[88] In a feltmakers' petition in 1580, more than 3,000 were claimed.[89] These figures suggest that the trade in London was 'fully expanded' with a considerable short-term growth before 1531.[90]

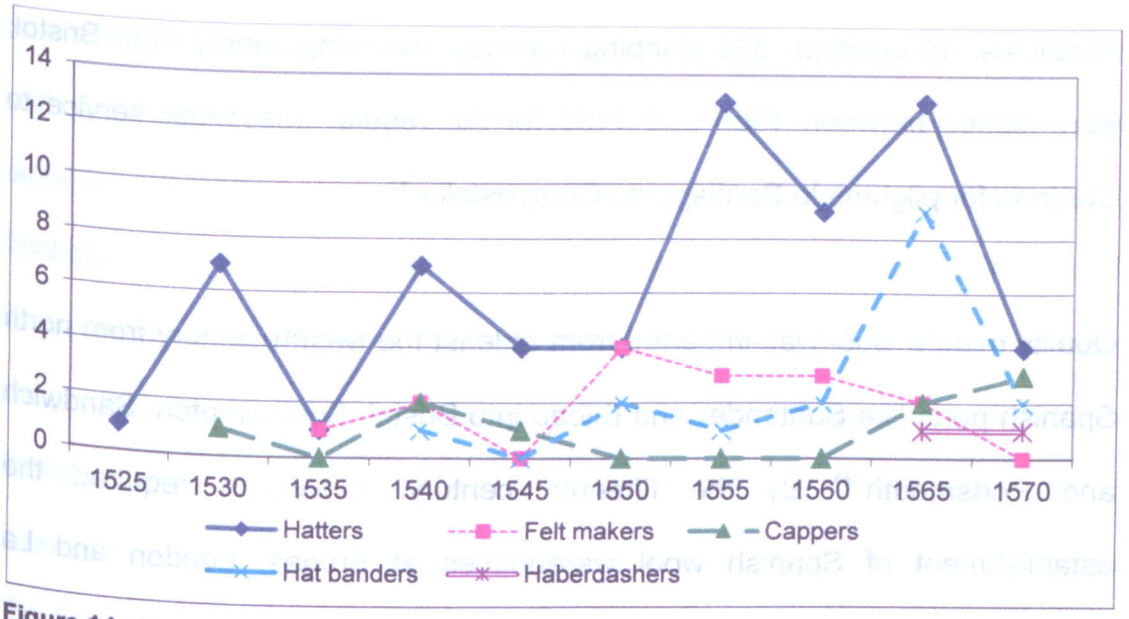

Figure 14: Alien workers in the hat trade: arrival in London, 1525-1570.

No name match can be made between the feltmaker aliens in London and those recorded in the early days of the Bristol Company or in the city's apprenticeship records; nor have the Bristol records provided any conclusive 'foreign' names.[91]

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87 Kirk, *Aliens*.
88 Sharpe, *Letter-Books*, F 143 (London, Francis 1902), fn. cxlvii, cited in Giles, 'Felt-Hatting', p. 104.
89 Weinstein, *Feltmakers*, p. 9; Archer, *Haberdashers*, pp. 61-63.
90 Duckworth, *Notes*, p. 12.
91 The first 152 Huguenot refugees arrived in Bristol in 1681 with three hatters among their number: Jacques Jomas, registered 1701-1702 from Belmont-les-Valence (Drôme), Dauphiné province; Pierre Pudin, 1700-1748, Metz (Moselle), Loraine province; and Pierre Perpoint, 1699-1738, Chabeuil (Drôme), Dauphiné, province (Ronald Mayo, 'The Bristol Huguenots

If the feltmaking influence in Bristol did not come from north Europeans, Spain becomes a possibility.[92] There was a regular hat trade between Spain and Portugal and most ports of South West England from the later fifteenth century. 'Iberia was attractive for wine, licorice, rosin and, above all, Basque iron from the north, and for wine oil, dried and fresh fruit, kermes dyes and various luxury foods and manufactures from Lisbon, the Algarve, and Andalusia'. In addition, 326 shipping licences, including twenty from Bristol, were issued between 1368 and 1485 for the regular passenger service to Corunna for pilgrims to Santiago de Compostella.[93]

Quality merino wool was imported from at least the twelfth century from north Spanish ports like Santander and Bilbao into Bristol, Southampton, Sandwich and Portsmouth.[94] By the fifteenth century, expansion required the establishment of Spanish wool warehouses at Bruges, London and La

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1681-1791', *Huguenot Society Proceedings*, Vol. XXI, 1970), pp. 437-454; also Ronald Mayo, *The Huguenots in Bristol*, No. 61, BBTHA, 1985, p. 29. However, names of Huguenot derivation are common among the later hatters of Bristol – as they are among any similar group – and may include, for instance, Bailey, Chamberlain, Curtis, Daniel, Drew, Glass, Joy, Mayhew, Moore, Paine, Pullen, Roach, Simonds, Tyron (email, *Huguenot Society of London*, 2007). Also, a similar influx of Huguenot hatters around 1700 to Berlin, Frankfurt and Magdeburg (Reginald Lane Poole, *A History of the Huguenots of the Dispersion at the Recall of the Edict of Nantes* (London, Macmillan 1880), fn. 3, p. 155.

[92] Peter Bowden, 'Wool Supply and the Woollen Industry', *The Economic History Review*, New Series, Vol. 9, No. 1 1956, pp. 44-58; Peter Bowden, *The Wool Trade in Tudor and Stuart England* (London, Macmillan 1962), p. 47; BL, *Lansdowne Manuscript*: 28: 71; 29: 23-27, 56, 58-62; 69: 31; Giles, 'Felt-Hatting', p. 105; Stephens, *Seventeenth-Century Exeter*, p. 173; Wendy R Childs, *Anglo-Castilian Trade in the Later Middle Ages* (MUP, 1978), p. 141; and several examples in Flavin and Jones, *Trade with Ireland*. For background to the sixteenth century English Andalusian and Spanish Companies, Pauline Croft, *The Spanish Company* (London Record Society, 1973), pp. vii-xxix.

[93] Wendy R Childs, 'The Commercial Shipping of South-Western England in the Later Fifteenth Century', *The Mariner's Mirror*, Vol. 83, No. 3, August 1997, p. 282.

[94] Charles Henry Hunt, *A Practical Treatise on the Merino and Anglo-Merino Breeds of Sheep; in which the Advantages to the Farmer and Grazier, peculiar to these Breeds, and Clearly Demonstrated* (London, Plant Piercy 1809).

Rochelle.[95] Peter Bowden felt this trade was for hat-making because he could find no evidence that Spanish wool was used by English woollen manufacturers before the 1620s.[96] The superiority of Spanish wool became widely established. By the eighteenth century, for example, 'with the growing specialisation in the manufacture of finer cloths' Spanish wool was a staple of the Wiltshire weavers.[97] During the early part of the reign of Henry VIII, there was a considerable number of English merchants living in Spain and trading with England, and with the Spanish New World colonies. Many of the men were from Bristol of whom the most well-known were the brothers Robert and Nicholas Thorne.[98] Trade was severely reduced following the Act of Supremacy in 1534 and suspected support in Spain for England's heretic monarch was punished ruthlessly.[99] The 'leading English merchants in Andalusia [previous home of the *chéchia*] submitted a written statement of their sufferings' under the Inquisition to a special envoy sent to Spain by the English king.[100] With the accession of Mary and her marriage in 1554 to Philip of Spain, trade improved. Until the time of the Armada, the Tyndall brothers,

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[95] Julius Klein, *The Mesta, A Study in Spanish Economic History 1273-1836* (Port Washington, New York, Kennikat 1964), pp. 34-37. Carla Rahn Phillips, 'The Spanish Wool Trade, 1500-1780', *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 42, No. 4, December 1982, pp. 777-783, 790-793.

[96] Bowden, *Wool Trade*, p. 47.

[97] 'Foreign wool quickly superseded the product of Wiltshire and Gloucestershire, whose quality temporarily declined when English agriculturalists laid greater stress on the sheep as a producer of food. Spanish wool was used in such large quantities in Wiltshire by 1797, that the outbreak of war with Spain in that year ... caused serious distress and caused many weavers to enlist in the army' (H R Exelby, *The Industrial Revolution in the Textile Industries of Wiltshire* (unpublished MA thesis, University of Bristol, 1928), pp. 12-13.

[98] Based on Spanish archives, particularly in Cadiz and Seville (Gordon Connell-Smith, 'English Merchants Trading to the New World in the Early Sixteenth Century', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, Vol. 23, London, Longmans, Green 1950), pp. 54-60.

[99] 26 Henry VIII 8, c. 1.

[100] Connell-Smith, 'English Merchants', p. 62. Also, Gordon Connell-Smith, *Forerunners of Drake, A study of English trade with Spain in the early Tudor period* (London, Longmans, Green 1954), pp. 3-35, and many individual references.

William and Robert, 'two of the most successful Bristol merchants of their time', were prominent in Spain with Robert probably living handily in the north at San Sebastian.[101]

As the home hat industry expanded, English merchants, especially the haberdashers and feltmakers but 'never the clothiers', 'turned more and more to dealing with wools from Spain and other foreign parts'.[102] Bristol's elite knew felt hats well enough through Spanish imports and, possibly, less so from a long-term influx of Dutch and French products into London.[103] A 'flourishing' Spanish felt hat industry exported to 'West partes', including Barnstaple, Bridgwater, Bristol and Exeter, from the fifteenth century.[104] Two vessels in the Bristol-Ireland trade exported 200 dozen Spanish felts in 1550-1551.[105] There were further shipments in 1553. The *Caesar*, wrecked in 1561 while inbound for Bristol, had twenty-four dozen Spanish felts packed carefully

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[101] Richard Stone, *How were the Tyndall brothers able to establish their fortunes?* (unpublished second-year project paper, University of Bristol, 2010), pp. 1-2. 'A *Spanish Company* was set up in 1577, probably to protect the trade'. It had 389 members including seventy-four from Bristol and two of the forty assistants were Bristol members (Croft, *Spanish Company*), pp. xiii, xvii, cited in J Vanes, edited, *Documents Illustrating the Overseas Trade of Bristol in the Sixteenth Century* (BRS, Vol. 31, 1979), p. 23. Echoes of this Spanish trade can be found in the 'other triangular trade' with the *Neptune* of Bristol with ten dozen hats in a broad cargo granted a pass 17/1/1640 'to go for New England and from thence to Newfoundland and so to Spain for wines to bring to Bristol' (Nott, *Deposition Books*), p. 28. Also, case of Christopher Vardie who sought compensation after being held at Valladolid where his 225 dozen felt hats were feared that 'by long lying sorely hurt' ('Elizabeth, July 1561, 11-20', *Calendar of State Papers Foreign, Elizabeth: 1561-1562*, Vol. 4), pp. 173-193, available www.british-history.ac.uk, accessed 2007.

[102] Bowden, *Wool Trade*, pp. 47, 79. BL, *Lansdowne* 28:71 which details a feltmaker petition of 1579. George Unwin, *Industrial Organisation in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Oxford, Clarendon Press 1904), p. 131.

[103] 'French hoods, caps, hats, from Venice and Spayne' (Thomas Newberry, *A booke in Englysh metre, of the great Marchaunt man called 'Dives Pragmaticus'*, London, Alexander Lacy 1563; No. 2, The John Rylands Facsimiles, MUP 1910).

[104] BL, Lansdowne: 28: 71; 29: 23-27, 56, 58-62; 69: 31. Giles, 'Felt-Hatting', p. 105. For Exeter imports, Stephens, *Seventeenth-Century Exeter*, pp. 167-179.

[105] *Sancta Maria* of Hondarribia, ninety-six dozen, 10/10/1550, p. 547; *Margaret* of Bristol, 104 dozen, 10/8/1551 (Flavin and Jones, *Trade with Ireland*), p. 609.

in coffers and wrapped in canvas.[106] Caution is immediately required. Were these felt hats or, perhaps, felted bonnets akin to the production recently moved from Andalusia to Tunis? Childs reports Spanish hat factories at Segovia and Toledo that may have shipped as early as 1459, but these towns were the centre of the *chéchia* trade.[107] There is no sure way of knowing, but they were called Spanish *felts*, not caps or bonnets, and were well protected in their packaging. Why import felted knitted caps to a city with an established if troubled industry only to re-export to Ireland? These were likely early felt hats and, importantly, were separate from any trade with London.[108] There is no sign of imported Spanish hats in Bristol after the establishment of the Company in 1595.

Conclusions

The Bristol cap trade, part of a long-established English industry, was in slow, terminal decline throughout the sixteenth century despite local and national support. The influence of government in the industry was evident throughout the sixteenth century. London received regular petitions from Bristol and other cap making towns requesting preference. In return, a stream of legislation

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[106] Vanes, *Documents Illustrating*, 1553: ten felt hats (TNA, E 159/332); 1559: six dozen felt hats seized, imported uncustomed (E 159/341).

[107] Childs, *Anglo-Castilian*, p. 141. There were chéchia factories at Seville, Cordoba, Granada, Valencia, Barcelona 'et surtout Tolède qui était la ville la plus renommée pour ses bonnets' (Miled, *Petit livre*), p. 49.

[108] Bristol's commercial independence was noted in the early seventeenth century by Defoe: 'The merchants of [Bristol] not only have the greatest trade, but they trade with a more entire independency upon London, than any other town in Britain. And 'tis evident in this particular, (viz.) That whatsoever exportations they make to any part of the world, they are able to bring the full returns back to their own port, and can dispose of it there. This is not the case in any other port in England' (Daniel Defoe, *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain*, Vol. 2, London, Everyman 1724), p. 36.

sought to protect the cappers and to promote their caps. Bristol cappers were undermined progressively by popular and local Monmouth caps, good quality French caps, and hats sold by London chapmen. Felt hats were well-known to Bristolians through long-term Spanish shipments direct to the city. Initially, these imports were ineffectually reserved for those of rank, increasing their attraction to the aspirant classes.

Dutch and French feltmakers were encouraged to the capital as part of the projects. The mood among the influential pamphleteers resulted in laws to promote the corporate towns through industrial specialisation and civic power, and to ease the ability to apply taxation.[109] Fisher declared that

> one of the major results of the depressions in the third quarter of the sixteenth century was to fasten upon English commerce a framework of companies which were to dominate its history for the next half-century ... Trade should be restricted to those who had served an apprenticeship; apprenticeship should be restricted to the sons of the well-to-do; and for each branch of trade there should be established a company to enforce those restrictions and to regulate the conduct of such [craftsmen] as were admitted to it.[110]

Feltmaking arrived in Bristol about 1540, contemporaneous with the other major English cities. Exeter and Gloucester were early adopters, probably developing their own trades shortly before Bristol. The likelihood is that a group of the city's entrepreneurs - projectors - from a variety of trades outside of hatmaking, as in Norwich, provided a protected working environment for

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[109] Smith, *Discourse*, p. 1.
[110] Fisher, 'Commercial Trends', p. 114.

skilled incomers. These incoming workers may have been foreigners, perhaps with Spanish, French or Flemish connections, and their names are not recorded.

By the 1570s, time-served cappers sent their sons to learn feltmaking; cap shipments to the Irish market gave way to hats. From the 1580s, entrepreneurial feltmakers and newly-established journeymen entered the civic establishment and, in 1595, joined with their haberdashers to form their own joint city Company. Here, again, government played a role, reserving the best hatmaking Spanish wool for the Company men and, in London, bringing the whole import into a tax-raising monopoly. It seems likely that 'stranger' workmen insisted on their traditional wools from Spain and the Baltic, finding British wools inferior.

In addition to the projects, the root stimulus for the flooding of pent up skills through England, there seems to be elements of happenstance. In France, the beginnings of Catholic religious persecution echoed the plight of the Andalusian Moors. France's felt skills were concentrated in traditional English trading areas like La Rochelle. Henry revoked his allegiance to Rome and this increased England's attraction to early French Protestants. Henry's marriage problems caused unpleasant disruption to Bristol merchants working in Spain and, though temporarily repaired, were ruptured with the advent of the

Armada and the closing of the Spanish hat market after 1568.[111] All of these things would have leant weight to a new felt hat industry in Bristol. Increasingly fashionable designs, status, and greater weather protection, meant that the felt hat quickly became part of the nation's everyday dress.[112]

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[111] Fisher, 'Commercial Trends', p. 116.

[112] Even in 1258, the London cappers recognised the fault in their ordinances, 'no-one shall cause an old cap to be dyed black for selling again, because when exposed to the rain it falls to pieces' (Giles, 'Felt-Hatting'), p. 104.

3 Beginnings: The villages to 1700

Within a generation many independent feltmakers in the South Gloucestershire villages were successful within their new trade and, by 1595, were sufficiently numerous and powerful to cause serious concerns to the newly-formed Company in Bristol.[1] What made the new felt hat manufacturing process so easy to acquire? If the skill was accessible and the work simple, why were felt hats not made everywhere? Were these villagers local men, transferred from some other work, or trained townsmen escaping Bristol business restrictions?

A group of sixty-nine named village feltmakers found before 1700 indicates a family-based, semi-industrial community of some mobility.[2] The actual number would be higher, but the lists of the period have limited occupational data. The first family feltmakers in the villages were probably the Ellery family: Richard worked in Westerleigh in 1608; William was in Frampton Cotterell in 1623; Walter in 1625, and his son Richard in Winterbourne in 1635.[3] Two feltmaker apprenticeships in Bristol, Richard Griffith of Winterbourne in 1638, and John Ellery, of Frampton Cotterell in 1671 to John Cooper, a relative through his mother, provide early links with the city's haberdashers.[4]

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[1] Discussed in Chapter 4: *Monopolies, 1550-1855.*
[2] Parish, apprenticeship, probate and legal records (BRO, GA).
[3] Many surname spelling variations.
[4] BRO, 04355/2.

The industrial environment in Gloucestershire in 1608 was closely examined by A J and R H Tawney in their review of the county muster roll compiled by John Smyth.[5] The roll contains the names of 19,402 men, but is 'not exhaustive'. Further, 12% of the men gave no occupation.[6] Some 93% of the roll lived outside the three main towns of Gloucester, Tewkesbury and Cirencester.[7] These towns were neither agricultural nor industrial, but 'finishing and distributing centres which had gathered around them rather more than the ordinary number of workers in other industries'.[8]

The Tawneys identified a group of seventeen clothworkers, clothmakers and feltmakers under 'Textiles', a small enough number which reflects the newness of the feltmaker's craft in England. Twelve hatters appeared among seventeen 'Others' under 'Making of Articles of Dress' and there were twelve haberdashers, whether of hats or small wares was not stated.[9] The majority of these craftsmen worked in the three main towns with just a handful in the villages. There were no feltmakers in *Bytton* and *Hanam*, Frampton Cotterell, *Hambrooke*, Pucklechurch or Winterbourne (where there were two clothiers), but, and it is a significant 'but', hatter Walter Ellary is recorded in

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[5] Bristol was not included. J Smyth, compiled, *Men and Armour for Gloucestershire in 1608* (London 1902, reprint Gloucester, Sutton 1980).
[6] The percentage of men for whom no information as to occupation or social status was given in the four hatter hundreds of Thornbury, 2.3%; Langley and Swineshead, 3.1%; Barton Regis, 6.4% and Pucklechurch 7.8% (Tawneys, 'Census'), fn. 2 and pp. 30-31.
[7] The next largest centre of population with 209 returns was Bitton and Hanham, a future hatter stronghold. Bristol population from a 1607 census was 10,549 (J F Nicholls, and John Taylor, *Bristol Past and Present*, 3 Vols., 'Civil History', Bristol, Arrowsmith 1881), Vol. 1, p. 273.
[8] Tawneys, 'Census', pp. 37-38.
[9] Tawneys, 'Census', Appendix, pp. 59-62.

Westerleigh.[10] At the time of registration in 1608, Bristol tradesmen were already exhibiting their considerable frustration with their feltmakers in the villages. These men were not fully captured by Smyth's muster roll.

One of the delights of the roll is that it contains the men's age ranges and rough heights so that the most appropriately-sized weapon could be allocated. Walter was 'about forty' and of the 'meanest stature either fit for a *pyoner*, or of little other use'.[11] With such low samples little wider inference should be drawn: all but three hatters and feltmakers were 'about forty', the rest 'about twenty'; the feltmakers were equally of 'the tallest stature fit to make a *pyke-man*' and 'middle stature fitt to make a *musketyer*' while the hatters were shorter, either of a 'lower stature fit to serve with a *calyver*' or mean-statured like Walter; they provided just one *musketyer*.[12]

Four probate inventories from about 1680 show that at least some of the village feltmakers were well-to-do. While called feltmakers, they were also heavily involved in husbandry and owned much more than just a few smallholding animals. Thomas Hollister of Westerleigh, in 1679, left twenty cattle, one mare and two pigs among an estate of £166 5s, including £40 worth of cheese and ready money of £68. Richard Ellery of Winterbourne, in 1680, held goods worth £99 18s 1d plus 'on pigg, on nagg, seven cowes, on

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[10] Manuscript spellings different from modern spellings are italicised.

[11] Smyth, *Armour*, pp. 31, 211. 'He made his Pyoners (poore weary soules) the selfe-same day, to dig and cast new Trenches, and plant strong Barricades' (Thomas Kyd, *Cornelia*, London 1594), Act V.

[12] A calyver was a soldier armed with a light kind of harquebus fired without a rest (OED, available, www.oed.com, accessed 2011).

heifer, and on yearling'. As well as a buttery and 'four Stocks of Bees', Richard Griffith of Winterbourne, in 1681, kept 'twenty-four Ewe and Lambs and forty drye Sheep'; and alongside nineteen animals, John Mills of Winterbourne, in 1685, had 'fourteen acres of wheat growing'. These animals may have been bought as a result of acquired wealth, but it is also possible that there was a long-term and pre-existing relationship with the land. The work balance of these feltmakers suggests agriculture was not dominant, but it was an important by-employment.[13]

This sense of 'belonging', of not being incomers, is supported by other evidence as well as agriculture. Family names were recorded in Winterbourne from 1600 when local parish registers began. Between 1700 and 1850, when most occupations were given, at least sixty-nine family groups were settled in the hatting trade.[14] The first mention of each 'hatting' family surname in the parish registers was established. A quarter of these feltmaker families were already in Winterbourne by 1625, and almost 54% of them lived in Winterbourne before 1700. Were these men drawn to the village by local success in feltmaking?

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[13] John S Moore, *The Goods and Chattels of our Forefathers, Frampton Cotterell and District Probate Inventories 1539-1804*, edited (Chichester, Phillimore 1976), Nos. 122, 127, 131, 153. Also Denzil Hollis, edited, Elizabeth Ralph, transcription, *Marriage Bonds for the Diocese of Bristol, excluding the Archdeaconry of Dorset*, Vol. 1, 1637-1700 (BGAS 1952), p. 17. Berg in 'Political economy and the principles of manufacture' in Maxine Berg, Pat Hudson, and Michael Sonenscher, edited, *Manufacture in town and country before the factory* (CUP 1983), pp. 38-39, summarises Defoe describing the West Riding as 'not a region of peasants practising by-employments, but a workforce dwelling in the countryside' (Defoe, *Tour*), pp. 493-94.

[14] Appendix 10: *First parish mentions of Winterbourne's hatting families.*

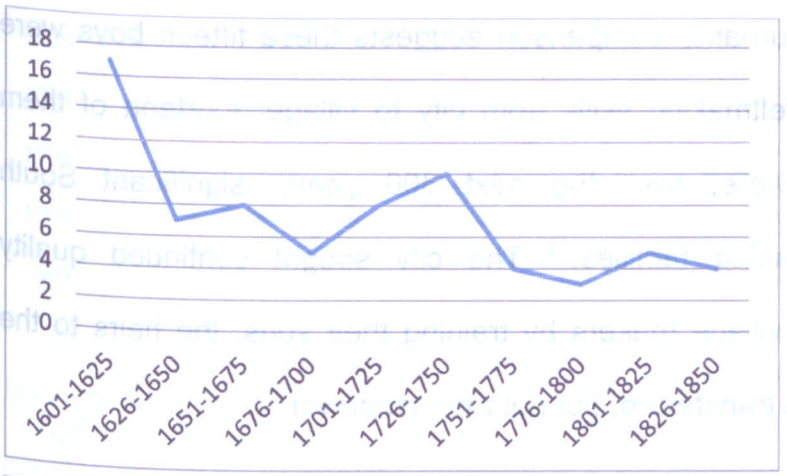

Figure 15: First mentions of hatting families in Winterbourne parish registers, 1601-1850, grouped in twenty-five year periods.

The Winterbourne surnames were examined for French or Dutch associations, but none were found. The surnames were then compared with those of the first sixty Company members in the five years from 1595.[15] There was no surname overlap; these were not the same families.

Bristol's feltmaker apprenticeships were reviewed for the fifty years from 1598.[16] The records were stripped of all entries where no home town was given, or where the boys were from within the city. Of the remaining 142 registrations, over 66% lived outside the feltmakers' area. There were no concentrations except, surprisingly, at Marshfield (17%), an isolated wool and malt market town with greater links to Bath than Bristol and no future association of consequence with feltmaking.[17] The main felting villages, particularly Mangotsfield, Westerleigh and Winterbourne, provided fifteen

[15] BRO, 08156/1. Appendix 9: *Bristol's feltmakers and haberdashers, 1595-1600.*
[16] Apprentice records, BRO: 04352, 04353, 04354, 04355, 04356, 04357, 05055. Also, I Fitzroy Jones, *Abstract of the Apprentice Books of the City of Bristol, 1600-1630* (BRO, 2102, 1936).
[17] If haberdashers of hats and other close trades are included, Marshfield contributed 7.4% of all hatting apprentices in the first half of the seventeenth century.

apprentices (6%). A surname comparison suggests these fifteen boys were part of a transfer of feltmaking skills from city to village; fourteen of them having names that were, over the next 300 years, significant South Gloucestershire feltmaking families.[18] The city sought continued quality among their favoured village makers by training their sons, the heirs to the workshops. Skills were transferred, but not the manpower.

Winterbourne's population grew slowly from 1600-1750.[19] This lack of vitality can be seen by assessing Winterbourne baptisms as a percentage of burials. There was no great migration to preferred villages. Parish records show that the limited movement of feltmakers between villages was almost all local and roughly in balance. Growth within the feltmaker community came mostly from existing village families changing occupation and this required local training.

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[18] Found apprenticed in Bristol: Burgess, Cooper, Curtis, England, Fry, Harford, Hollister, Jones, King, Nicholls, Osborne, Simmonds, Taylor and Tibbett.

[19] Moore recorded a Winterbourne population of 360 in 1608 which by 1711 may have reached 500, based on Smith (*Men and Armour*) and Atkyns (*Ancient and Present State*) (*Goods and Chattels*), p. 10, Table 2. Wrigley and Schofield estimated the population of England at 1600 as 4,066,132, at 1650 5,220,613 (28% growth over fifty years), at 1700 5,026,877 (4% decline), and at 1750 5,739,364 (14% growth) (*Population*), p. 532. This steadiness of population at Winterbourne occurred even though there was a surge in weddings from 1701-1750, up 130% (and from 1751-1800, up a further 138%).

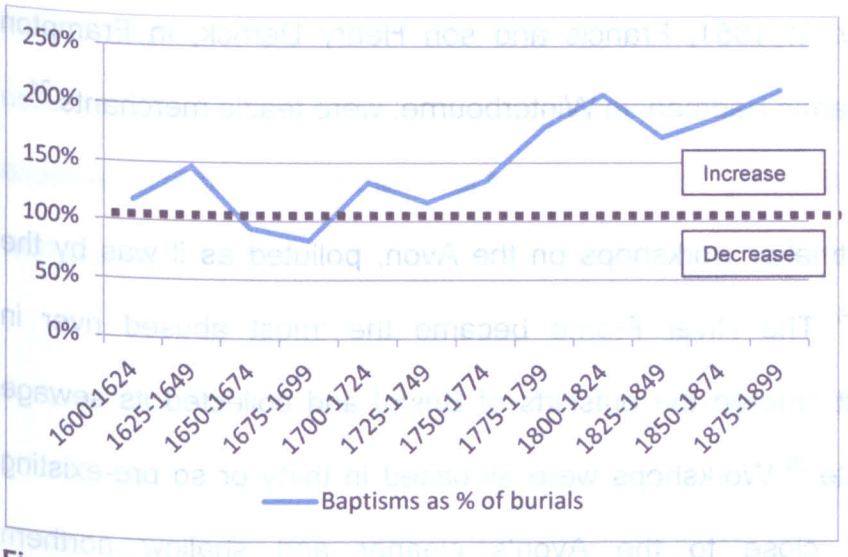

Figure 16: Winterbourne population change, 1600-1899. The 100% line indicates a static population with rapid growth occurring only after 1750.

The choice of South Gloucestershire villages for feltmaking is sometimes attributed to abundant local natural resources and near-by by-products.[20] The most popular suggestions are clean running water, coal, and the felted hat's early raw material, whether wool or rabbit fur. Sulphuric acid, or oil of vitriol, used for degreasing and roughening the fibres, was widely available in Bristol as a waste of the soap trade.[21] There were suitable dye plants.[22] Two unsubstantiated Bristol sources cite the use of local teasels to 'fetch up the surfaces of wool hats'.[23] This practice may have been extensive into the

[20] Moore, *Winterbourne*, pp. 19-20.
[21] Robert Morris, *English Commercial Chemicals 1580-1660* (Bristol, Stuart Press 2008), pp. 20-21. Matthews, *Soapmakers*.
[22] For instance, woad and madder: E M Carus Wilson, 'The English Cloth Industry in the Late Twelfth and Early Thirteenth Centuries', *The Economic History Review*, Vol. 14, No. 1, 1944, pp. 35-39; K G Ponting, *A History of the West of England Cloth Industry* (London, Macdonald 1957), pp. 16-17; Stuart Peachey and David Hopkins, *Dyeing the Clothing of the Common People 1580-1660*, Bristol, Stuart Press 2001.
[23] G E Burns, *A Brief History of Oldland* (Private pamphlet 1955), p. 9. David Noble, *An Oldland Boy Looks Back* (David and Marguerite Noble 1991). However, teasels were used at least until 1989 in the woollen cloth, felt and paper industries (Allan Hall, 'The last teasel factory in Britain, and some observations of teasel (*Dipsacus fullonium*) remains from archaeological deposits', *Ciracea*, Vol. 9, No. 1, 1992), p. 9.

nineteenth century: in 1851, Francis and son Henry Derrick, in Frampton Cotterell, and Benjamin Badman, in Winterbourne, were teazle merchants.[24]

There were no feltmaker workshops on the Avon, polluted as it was by the citizens of Bath.[25] The River Frome became the 'most abused river in England' only as it entered the outskirts of Bristol and collected its sewage and industrial waste.[26] Workshops were all based in thirty or so pre-existing villages clustered close to the Avon's cleaner and shallow northern tributaries.[27] Swift-flowing water was not in itself a requirement.[28] With two exceptions at Oldland Bottom and Willsbridge on Siston Brook, workshops were on high ground and relied on feeder streams, hand pumps and deep wells.[29] There was no water-powered machinery. Coal and wood for charcoal, if not free, were available on or near the surface in large quantities, and like water, had no exclusivity to Gloucestershire. The same argument applied to wool and, as Thirsk explained, its occurrence was 'so widespread that one

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[24] These families were from Somerset and may have been buying local teasels rather than selling to the hatters (1851 census). It is difficult to assess whether the practice, taken from the woollen trade, was extensive; imported pumice stone from Italy was a long-time option (TNA, Probate, Henry Dawes, London, 6/5/1687, PROB 4/18051). Appendix 11: *Probate Inventory of Thomas Dawes, 1687.* Rudge noted in 1807 that 'not a hundred acres of teazle are planted in [Gloucestershire] ... the best of three grades, Kings, are generally sent into Yorkshire to be used in cloths of coarse texture (Rudge, *General View*), pp. 155-159.

[25] Moore, *Winterbourne*, p. 19.

[26] The River Frome was the carrier of Bristol's cholera epidemic in 1833 (Rev. D C Hearle, quoting the Bristol Civic Society in 'The Growth of Methodism in the Frome Valley and South Gloucestershire', an address at Watley's End Methodist Church, 7 March 1992, *Wesley Historical Society, Bristol Branch*, Bulletin No. 63), p. 1.

[27] Map, frontispiece.

[28] There has been some unattributed discussion that an undisclosed chemical characteristic in the constitution of the local water which may have helped in the dye process, but no support for this argument has been found.

[29] It was not until 1834, for instance, that the Christy manufactory at Frampton Cotterell dammed a pond and ran a culvert to their works to obviate their well (CA, Luke Fowler to Christy's, Stockport, 25/7/1834).

must explain why cloth [and hats] was not made everywhere'.[30] The villagers used cheap regional wools; top foreign wools like the Spanish merino, and expensive beaver imports through London, were held for use in local workshops controlled by the Bristol haberdashers.[31]

A defining characteristic of the feltmaker's art was its unchanging nature from introduction in the sixteenth century until the gradual investment in machinery in the late nineteenth century. Even then, feltmakers were still at work in Stockport well into the twentieth century and, in 1964, in Shiraz, Iran.[32]

Figure 17: A feltmakers' battery c. 1850.[33]

This consistency over almost four hundred years can be shown through contemporary descriptions and illustrations. There are two drawings from the

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[30] Joan Thirsk, 'Industries in the Countryside', *Rural Economy*, p. 219.
[31] Hudson's Bay Company records, Manitoba, courtesy of Duckworth. Invoices (CA, B/P/2/20). Probate, Dawes. Bernard Allaire, *Pelleteries, Manchons et Chapeaux de Castor, Les Fourrures Nord-Américaines à Paris 1500-1632* (L'Université de Paris-Sorbonne et Toronto, Septentrion 1999), pp. 41-46. J F Crean, 'Hats and the Fur Trade', *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 3, 1962, pp. 373-376. E E Rich, 'Russia and the Colonial Fur Trade', *The Economic History Review*, New Series, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1955, pp. 307-328. T S Willan, 'Trade between England and Russia in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century', *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 63, No. 248, July 1948, pp. 307-321. H A L Fisher, *A History of Europe* (London, Eyre and Spottiswoode 1936), p. 375.
[32] Burkett, *Art of the Feltmaker*, p. 2.
[33] Hawkins, *Feltmakers*, facing p. 172.

seventeenth century. The first is a set of tools included in Holme's *Academy of Armory*.[34] The second, in 1666, comes from a little-circulated study by Robert Hooke to improve techniques in the felt trade, but he failed to stir interest among fellow members of the Royal Society.[35] As part of his lecture, attended by Samuel Pepys, Hooke shared a drawing of the felt hatmaking process, evidently already well-established.[36] To the left, there is a craftsman at work with his bow, sorting and arranging the fibres; to the right, makers standing by a liquor kettle apply hand pressure to rolled felts. The equipment of the professional team in Hooke's drawing correlates easily with the simple equipment shown in the probates of the village feltmakers and was suitable for their one- or two-man felt hood making workshops.

Figure 18: Drawing of the feltmaking process by Robert Hooke, 1666. Copyright: The Royal Society.[37]

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[34] Randle Holme, *Academy of Armory* (Chester 1649-1688), Book III, Chapter 6, Sections 4; NW Alcock and Nancy Cox, *Living and Working in Seventeenth Century England, An Encyclopaedia of Drawings and Descriptions from Randle Holme's Original Manuscript* (British Library cd 2000).

[35] Robert Hooke, *Lecture to the Royal Society*, February 1666 (Royal Society, GB 117 Classified Papers XX, 3). Appendix 12: *The way of making felts, Robert Hooke, 1666.*

[36] Robert Latham, edited, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, 1666, Vol. VII (Berkeley, Harper Collins 1995), p. 51.

[37] For an explanation of the figures and letter-denoted objects, Appendix 13: *Explanation of Robert Hooke's illustration, 1666.*

There were three prime illustrations of eighteenth century feltmakers at work, two of them French.[38] From these three, many nineteenth century copies and adaptations flowed.[39]

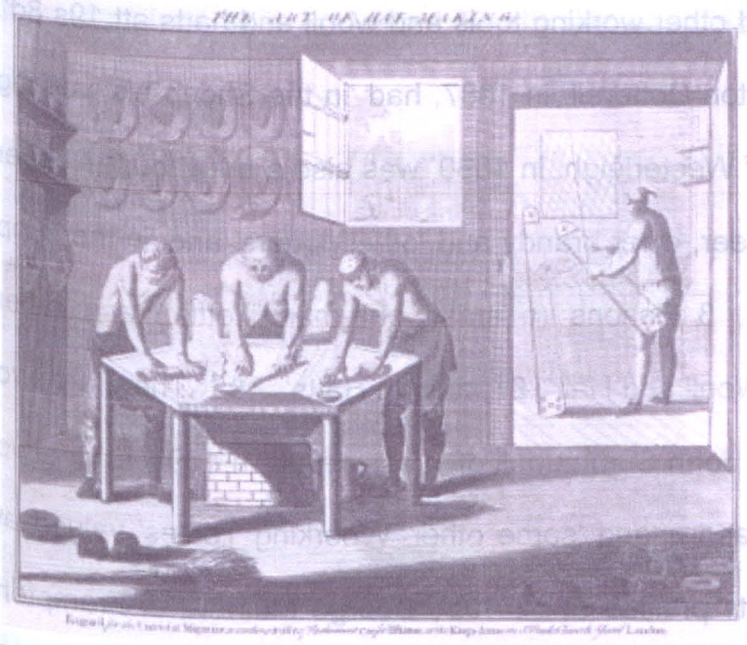

Figure 19: The simple equipment for a feltmaker workshop, 1750. In the background, the feltmaker's bow; foreground, three men roll felts on planks and into a kettle heated by a charcoal fire.

John Nef asserted that the 'important thing about the new Elizabeth industries was that in all of them plant was set up involving investments far beyond the sums which groups of master-craftsmen could muster, even if these artisans

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[38] *Universal Magazine*, 1750. The text is reproduced in Appendix 5: *Felt hat manufacture, 1750*. Diderot, *Recueil de Planches*. M Abbé J Nollet, 'Chapelier', *L'Art de Faire des Chapeux* (Paris 1765). A comparison of texts suggests that either Nollet wrote the piece on hatmaking for Diderot, or borrowed heavily from it for his later work. These manufacturing processes are examined in Sonenscher, *Eighteenth-Century France*, particularly pp. 20-25.

[39] Among the best descriptions: Thomas Martin, 'Hat-Making', *The Circle of the Mechanical Arts* (London, Richard Rees 1813), pp. 400-409; unattributed, *The Hat Makers Manual; containing A Full Description of Hat Making In All Its Branches* (London, Cowie and Strange 1829; Pufpaff, *Manuals*, 1995); Charles Knight, 'Hats: Their Material and Manufacture', *The Pictorial Gallery of Arts*, Vol. 1, 'Useful Arts' (London, George Cox 1847), pp. 136-138; Dodd, 'Hat-Factory', pp. 137-158; Thomson, *Treatise*.

were men of some substance'.[40] In feltmaking, this is not correct. The equipment was inexpensive and common place, so much so that it was little detailed.[41] As well as ready supplies of wood board, Richard Ellery had 'in the shoppe on Iron kattel and other working tools and wooll and hatts att 19s 8d'. Richard Parker of Frampton Cotterell, in 1687, had 'in the Shoop his working tools £1'.[42] John Smith of Westerleigh, in 1690, was also a brewhouse keeper with vats and stocks of beer, cider brandy and 'other liquors' and 'in the shop 2 Furnaces and Grates, 3 Basons (a small one-man 'kettle') and other Implements', worth £4; 'Wooll and Hair', £7; and 'In Hatts', £8.[43] There are two mentions of felting bows: John Summurhill of Westerleigh, in 1690/1, had two kettles, two bows, two basons and 'some other 'Woorking Toules' valued at 10s with '5 dozen of hatts praised at £2 10s'; George Muirford of Frampton Cotterell, in 1694/5, had 'two bowes and 2 bow Hurdles, three Basons, 2 Stampers 16s. The Blocks and Plans and other working tooles 12s'.[44]

These feltmakers' tools show the ease of a 'people's' technological breakthrough in South Gloucestershire, and across the country, if markets and city sponsors could be found. The task of the villagers was to provide felted hoods that could be dyed and styled by city hatmakers. The village end of the process required, first, clean wool and a feltmaker's bow for separating and re-laying the fibres into a *batt* and, second, some planks of wood upon which

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[40] John U Neff, 'The Progress of Technology and the Growth of Large-Scale Industry in Great Britain, 1540-1640', *The Economic History Review*, Vol. 5, No. 1, October 1934, p. 6.
[41] Appendix 5: *Felt hat manufacture, 1750.*
[42] Moore, *Goods and Chattels*, No. 166.
[43] Moore, *Goods and Chattels*, No. 176.
[44] Moore, *Goods and Chattels*, Nos. 181, 203.

the thick batt could be rolled in and out of hot, and often acidic, water in a felting kettle to reduce it to felt. The work was onerous and unhygienic, especially when chemicals were later added to the process. However, apart from practised skill with the bow, in the early days it was not inherently difficult.

Figure 20: A collection of twentieth century felt hoods ready for hatmaking which would be instantly recognisable to the seventeenth century village feltmaker.[45]

The bow's great benefit was that it caused extensive separation of the fibres while placing them in the required pattern and to the appropriate depth. When subsequently placed under pressure, there was already a more thorough mixing than could be achieved by hand. The resultant felt contained evenly spread, tightly packed fibre which gave a denser and smoother finish. Basic versions of the bow take less than a day to make, based on a recent hand-tool reconstruction.[46] A description of bow working, taken from an 1868 manual, demonstrates the skill required.[47] The bow is a tall as a man and held in the

[45] Stockport Hat Works Museum, 2009.
[46] Seven-foot bow reconstructed by the author in 2009 from a drawing (Hawkins, *Feltmakers*), p. 16, and demonstrated at over thirty university and historical society papers and talks.
[47] Thomson, *Treatise*, pp. 99-100.

left hand while in the right is a small piece of wood with a knobbed head with which

> [the feltmaker] tugs the string of the bow and makes it vibrate upon the stuff [cleaned fibre] and into it, with great dexterity and with the nicest judgement. This operation has always been considered a beautiful sight to a stranger, as the performer goes on plucking the string, and the string playing, upon the top of the fur which lies upon the left hand side of the platform. The fur touched by the string is made to fly from one side of the boards to the other with the greatest regularity. So nicely is this bowing performed, the stuff flying from the bow-string hair by hair, and flake by flake, that a hat in this loose state [the *batt*] may measure several inches in thickness.

The foregoing arguments describe the local origins of the feltmakers, the ubiquity of the raw materials, and the relative simplicity of the tools. However, nothing yet differentiates South Gloucestershire from, say, North Somerset, just across the Avon and equally tucked around Bristol. There were no significant felt hat manufactories in Somerset except at Taunton and, later, Frome.[48] There is no satisfactory explanation of why the craft was so quickly understood and appropriated in this one area.

The part answer is that felt hatmaking was a child of the woollen industry. This connection, previously unremarked, had wide and long-lasting implications which will be encountered throughout this thesis. The two trades had an interesting proximity. The West of England cloth industry is usually split into

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[48] Parish records.

the two areas of North and Central Gloucestershire, and that of Wiltshire and Somerset, each with distinct economics, but often portrayed together because of their production of fine broadcloth.[49] The contraction of the broadcloth industry, faced with under-capitalisation, foreign competition and the new water-powered fulling mills, was already well underway at the advent of feltmaking.[50] The mills needed fast-running water and that required a re-concentration on the slopes of the Cotswolds to the north and east of Bristol.[51] The newly-arrived felt hatmaking settled snugly into this area vacated by the weaving trade.

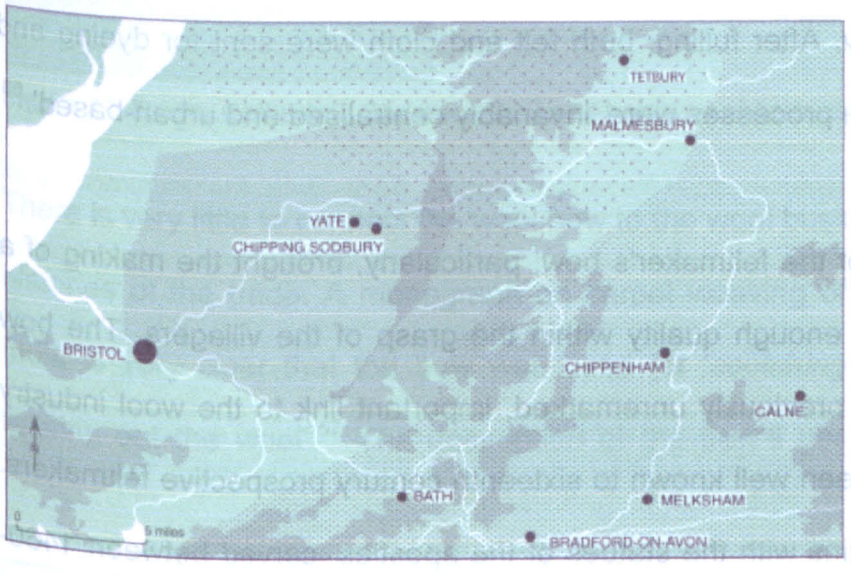

Figure 21: The area of feltmaking (north and east of Bristol, dense hatching), and the Gloucestershire (northern, larger dots) and Somerset and Wiltshire (east and south east, lighter hatching) cloth trade.

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[49] Mann, *Cloth Industry*, p. xi. Also: Bowden, *Wool Trade*; Derek Gregory, *Regional Transformation and Industrial Revolution, A Geography of the Yorkshire Woollen Industry* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press 1982); Pat Hudson, 'Proto-Industrialisation: The Case of the West Riding Wool textile Industry in the 18th and Early 19th Centuries', *History Workshop*, No. 12, pp. 34-61, Autumn 1981; Perry, *Gloucestershire woollen industry*; K G Ponting, *A History of the West of England Cloth Industry* (London, Macdonald 1957); Adrian Randall, *Before the Luddites, Custom, community and machinery in the English woollen industry 1776-1809* (CUP 1991).

[50] Leland, c. 1538-1543, talked of 'decayed clothing' in South Gloucestershire towns and much 'idleness' (John Chandler, edited, *John Leland's Itinerary, Travels in Tudor England*, Stroud, Sutton 1993), pp. x, xxvii-xxxi, 175-196.

[51] Moore, *Winterbourne*, p. 21.

The industries were also closely comparable in manufacturing process, if not in scale, and used the same raw material, wool. Both trades had similar operating systems; the feltmakers had their city haberdashers, the weavers their clothiers, both merchants and industrialists, but essentially organisers.[52] A hatter would immediately feel at home with the cloth-making process. The vital difference came from the initial assembly of the material; cloth being woven from fibre, felt being fibres pressed together, as reflected by the separate products, the *chéchia* and the felt hood. Regional feltmakers continued their insistence on hand fulling for hats right until their demise in the nineteenth century. After fulling, both felt and cloth were sent for dyeing and finishing and these processes were 'invariably centralised and urban-based'.[53]

The introduction of the feltmaker's bow, particularly, brought the making of a felt hood of good enough quality within the grasp of the villagers. The bow provides another, previously unremarked, important link to the wool industry and would have been well known to sixteenth century prospective feltmakers. The evidence begins with the statues of the apostles, carved between 1460-1480, and positioned above the west front door of Exeter Cathedral.[54] Second from the right hand end is Saint James the Less, identified by in his left hand a spear or, more likely, fuller's club, and in his right an 'undoubted' wool bow, a

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[52] Randall, *Luddites,* pp. 18-35.
[53] Hudson, 'Proto-Industrialisation', p. 37.
[54] This group of statues was dated, 'with a preference for the earlier end of this range', based on a consistency of work, and contemporary hat, shoe and purse usage of some of the figures (J P Allan and S R Blaylock, 'The West Front: I, The Structural History of the West Front', Kelly, *Exeter Cathedral*), pp. 103-104.

shortened, but distinctly similar version of the feltmaker's bow.[55] The use of iconography aided the identification by and, sometimes, explained the purpose of statuary to, an illiterate audience.[56]

Figure 22: Exeter Cathedral: St James the Less holds an abbreviated wool bow.

There is very little to connect the wool bow to the wool business in the popular histories of the trade. A monograph on carpet weaving of 1906 in Southern India is very clear that the bow was used for '*scotching*, or cleaning, and teasing out the wool'.[57] The description of the bow's use could have been

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[55] St James the Less, C Register 21, (Avril Henry, 'West front: III, The Iconography of the West Front', *Medieval Art and Architecture at Exeter Cathedral*, edited Francis Kelly (BAA 1991), pp. 138-140. Henry calls the club a spear and relies on a possible derivation of James from *jaculo*, a 'lance' or 'dart' (Jean Des Roches, *Dictionarium latino-gallicum*, second edition, Brussels 1785), p. 479; (Jacobus de Voragine, *Golden Legend*, translated William Caxton, Vol. 3, 1260, reprint William Morris 1893), pp. 73-77.

[56] 'Des artistes flamands et hollandaise, interprétant sans doute les coutumes juives d'après ce qu'ils avaient sous les yeux, ont transformé souvent cette perche de foulon en un énorme archet sous-tendu par une forte lanière de cuir. J'imagine que cet instrument faisait à peu près la fonction des baguettes qui servent à nos matelassiers [mattress makers] pour render l'élasticité aux flocons de laine quand elle a pris son pli sous une depression prolongée' (Charles Cahier, *Caractéristiques des Saints dans L'Art Populaire*, Paris, 1867), Vol. II, pp. 547-548, cited in Richard P Bedford, *St James The Less, A Study in Christian Iconography* (London, Quaritch, Griffin Club 1911), p. 23.

[57] Henry T Harris, *Monograph on the Carpet Weaving Industry of Southern India* (Madras, Government Press 1908, reprint Charleston, SC, USA, BiblioLife 2011), p. 25. The professional bowman was called a *dhunia*, *behna* or *pinjari*.

written by a feltmaker.[58] The bow was used both by hatmakers in laying felt, and by wool-workers in clearing or *whipping* wool.[59]

The choice of St James the Less to hold the wool bow and a fuller's club stems from his joint patronage of the feltmakers and the woolworkers. The latter is a little surprising as James, the first bishop of Jerusalem, was martyred there with a fuller's club 'so that his brains fell all abroad'.[60] The staff became confused with the bow and many fifteenth and sixteenth depictions have James being struck with this inappropriate weapon.[61] Iconographic evidence of St James the Less with the woolworkers is sparse in England, with only one known example in Gloucestershire with an outlying rescued church.[62] There is one connection shortly after 1500 with the regulations of the Hatters' Company, written in English, and Dutch or Flemish, in 'the feathe

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[58] Perhaps, also, by Indian feltmakers in 1694 who produced 'such great quantities' of cheap felt hats for export to England by the East India Company that London merchants launched a petition (*HCJ*, 1694), Vol. 11, pp. 58-59.

[59] Bedford, *James*, p. 21.

[60] Martyred in 62AD (Voragine, *Legend*), p. 74; Hegesippus, *Book of Commentary*, V (c. 170AD); Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 2.23 (c. 320AD); Bedford, *James*, p. 4. This was a third attempt in 'merciful cruelty' after James was pushed off the temple wall, or out of a pulpit, and then stoned by a Jewish mob.

[61] Nuremberg Museum, Hans Holbein, the elder, c. 1460-1524, (Bedford, *James*), p. 31; Woodcut, printed Michel Wolgemut, Nuremberg 1491 (British Museum, AN46113001, with the bow wrongly catalogued as a fuller's club). Depicted martyrdoms that agree with Voragine's legend include a mosaic in *La Basilica di S Marco di Venezia*, edited C Boito, III (1881), plate XLVI; and an early sixteenth century Greek manuscript in the *Bibliothèque Nationale*, Paris (Bedford, *James*), plate 2, p. 10. Other iconography that poses James with a wool bow includes a woodcut, printed Urs Graf, Swiss, 1500-1530 (British Museum, AN57504001, again wrongly catalogued as a fuller's club); *Adelheid, wife of Arnold von Loe, and Saint James the Less*, Everhard Rensig or Gerhard, Remisch Germany (Lower Rhine), 1519 (V&A, No C.241-1928); and *Saint James the Less and hatter's bow* (Tobias Stimmer, 1539-1584, Switzerland; sold by auction at Sotheby's, New York, 2009).

[62] For instance, a carved relief on an oak beam of St James the Less holding a fulling club with lion and elephant at Salter's Hall, Friars Street, Sudbury (Suffolk Recording Archive for Public Sculpture, SUbaSU003). Church of St James, Charfield, near Wotton-under-Edge was rebuilt in the fifteenth century from wealth created by the local wool trade, available www.visit.churches.org.uk, accessed 2011.

and Frat'inte of Saynt James ... and kepte in the Church of the fryer prechours of the Cyte of London'.[63]

Does the statue of St James at Exeter with its wool bow lead the way to a connection between the Gloucestershire wool and felt hat industries? The cathedral's builders presumably thought that the bow would be recognised by its worshippers and that would suggest it was a common tool in the fifteenth century in the region, and in the country at large. At this time, Exeter, the third or fourth city of England, with its booming wool exports, was importing bonnets and hats from Spain and from Rouen in France.[64]

The bow, a tool now forgotten, was a staple of the wool industry in Europe in the fifteenth century. A 'close connection existed in medieval times between the gilds of the fullers and the hatters'. This is demonstrated by a collection of the arms of gilds in both trades.[65] The graphic evidence is compelling.

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[63] It is unclear whether these hatters, largely with Dutch names, worked in felt (LGL, MS 15,838, Haberdasher Company).

[64] E M Carus-Wilson, *The Expansion of Exeter at the Close of the Middle Ages* (University of Exeter 1963), pp. 13, 29-31. The Cathedral Treasury at Santiago has a reliquary containing what is claimed to be the head of St James the Less. Santiago was the post for pilgrims travelling from both Bristol and Exeter to walk the *Camino Ingles* from *Ferrol* to *Santiago de Compostela* and the shrine of the 'other' St James. Also Childs, 'Commercial Shipping', pp. 272-292.

[65] Bedford, *James*, p. 24.

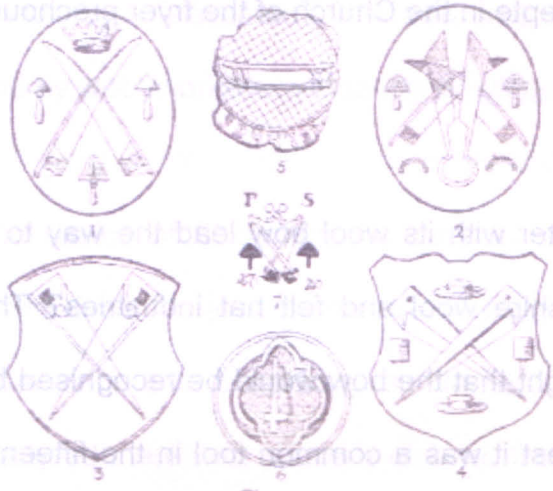

Figure 23: European hatmaker, wool beater and cloth maker insignia.[66]

Conclusions

The arrival of feltmaking in the sixteenth century was welcomed by an already domiciled South Gloucestershire village community with long-standing experience of the wool business. When the weavers moved to the scarps, local men in the vacated areas quickly took up the new craft. The new feltmakers were used to the wool bow: a transfer to a larger version for felt hood preparation was an easy step. The men also knew that cloth was fulled by both feet and by machine. They found that to make hoods the felt needed to be worked by hand to ensure the attention to detail needed in a small, quality item. If wool was to hand, the bow and the hand work gave the men control over the initial phase of hatmaking.

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[66] **1** & **2** coats of arms, cloth makers, Magdeburg and Gardelegen, 17C; **3** Woollen weavers, 1600; **4** Hatmakers, Cracow, 1664; **5** France, 1847-1857; **6** Wool beaters of Bruges, 1356-1407; **7** Hatters' gild arms on majolica vase, Gmunden, Austria (Bedford, *James*, Figure 21, wrongly stated as 20, p. 24).

Established Bristol merchants encouraged the transfer of felt hood manufacture from city to village as they sought cheap labour. They provided village youth with formal training in Bristol to maintain and improve skills.

There was continuous small-scale inward migration, but this was mostly balanced between local villages and driven by individual hatting opportunities. There is no evidence in the villages before 1700 of workers from Bristol, London, or from overseas. There was no steady economic migration from Bristol of tradesmen seeking independence and freedom from regulation.[67]

[67] Walker, *Guild control*, p. 6. G Ramsay, 'Industrial Laisser-Faire and the Police of Cromwell,' *Economic History Review*, Vol. XVI, 1946, p. 109.

4 Beginnings: Monopolies, 1550-1855

Two monopolies, one of capital and the marketplace, the other of labour and independent craft manufacture, dog almost any discussion of the regional felt hat business. The trade was born in the sixteenth-century acrimony of the first and, because of both, died a cruel and powerless death three hundred years later in the villages. The monopolies were implacable: the masters insisted on their rights to control civic trade; the men managed apprenticeships to control craft entry. The immediate purpose is to investigate the unfolding of these clashes of wills.[1] Later chapters about the villages examine the detailed consequences.

Viewed from London, the Bristol Company was an unlikely combination as the haberdashers, the hat retailers, sought since the fourteenth century to control not partner their producing crafts. The capital's hatters joined in 1501 with the cappers and hurers and next year merged with the haberdashers. At first, the makers welcomed the power of the haberdashers to contain the inflow of foreign wools and craft skills and to invigorate searches for 'false' hats.[2] Within fifteen years, the feltmakers were disillusioned. The haberdashers were

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[1] Works on the craft guilds used as background in this chapter: Charles Gross, *The Gild Merchant*, 2 Vols. (1890: reprints, Vol. 1, General Books, 2010; Vol. 2, OUP 1927); William Herbert, *The History of the Twelve Great Livery Companies of London* (London, Private 1836); Stella Kramer, *The English Craft Gilds: Studies in their Progress and Decline* (Columbia University Press 1927); Toulmin Smith, *English Gilds*, essay Lujo Brentano (1870, reprint, The Early English Text Society, OUP 1963); Unwin, *Gilds*; Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *The History of Trade Unionism*, revised edition extended to 1920 (London, Longmans, Green 1926); Joan Lane, *Apprenticeship in England, 1600-1914* (London, UCL, Routledge 1996).
[2] Weinstein, *Feltmakers*, pp. 5-7.

the main wool importers and declined to search themselves.[3] They were denounced as 'riche men' who were 'reson [upon] the destruction of pore people'.[4] Years of angry dispute, described by Unwin as a 'struggle between industrial and commercial capital', brought petitions by the feltmakers in 1577 and 1583 pleading for independence.[5] In 1604, the king granted the feltmakers a charter of incorporation within the city and for a four-mile radius.[6]

Bristol's partnership was a more amicable agreement 'between men who realised that it would be uneconomic to maintain separate organisations'.[7] Kramer suggests, based on local ordinances, that 'they adopted from the start a safer means of preserving harmony ... on a more equal footing'. The Company was actually two separate trades cohabiting.[8] There were joint masters and wardens, one of each from both trades.[9] There was no doubt, though, who were the richer brethren: haberdashers' quarterly payments to the Company were twice those of the feltmakers.

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[3] Feltmakers complained that searches did not happen 'because the chiefest ... merchants that bringeth in [the] wools are haberdashers' (Unwin, *Industrial Organisation*), pp. 131-135.
[4] Stow, *Annales*, pp. 211-311.
[5] Weinstein, *Feltmakers*, pp. 8-9.
[6] Archer, *Haberdashers*, pp. 67-70; Unwin, *Industrial Organisation*, pp. 44, 81-4, 131-35.
[7] Kramer, *Craft Gilds*, p. 46. Amalgamations between different combinations of cappers, feltmakers, haberdashers, hatters, hurers, and skinners were not unusual and reflected local priorities. Unwin saw those of Exeter and York as like London; Giles thought Chester 'unfriendly' because the feltmakers joined the skinners against the haberdashers; while Kramer saw Exeter as similar to Bristol, and was unsure about Andover, Norwich and Ripon (Unwin, *Industrial Organisation*, p. 82; Giles, 'Felt-Hatting', p. 106; Kramer, *Craft Gilds*, Chapters III and IV on amalgamation. The arrangement in York in 1591 between the haberdashers, feltmakers, and cappers 'can scarcely be quoted as a union enforced by poverty, because the haberdashers and feltmakers were both flourishing trades at this date' (Tillott, 'Tudor York'), pp. 122-135.
[8] Article, 10/1/1597 (BRO, 08156/1), p. 3.
[9] Ordinance 1 (BRO, 043691/1). Appendix 14: *Master's oath, 1614.*

The Bristol Company quickly set out to enforce its new monopoly over the right to trade in felt hats within the walls.[10] By doing so, the traders were able to maintain high profits at the expense of their customers.[11] Their immediate antagonists came from feltmaker villages wishing to supply felt hoods to any willing city buyers.[12] Argument over access to Bristol's hatters and their markets became increasingly stringent and, at times, farcical. This was an unnatural monopoly made legal. To succeed for a sufficient time for excess profits to be taken, the Company needed a wall built of legal bricks that they could police effectively.

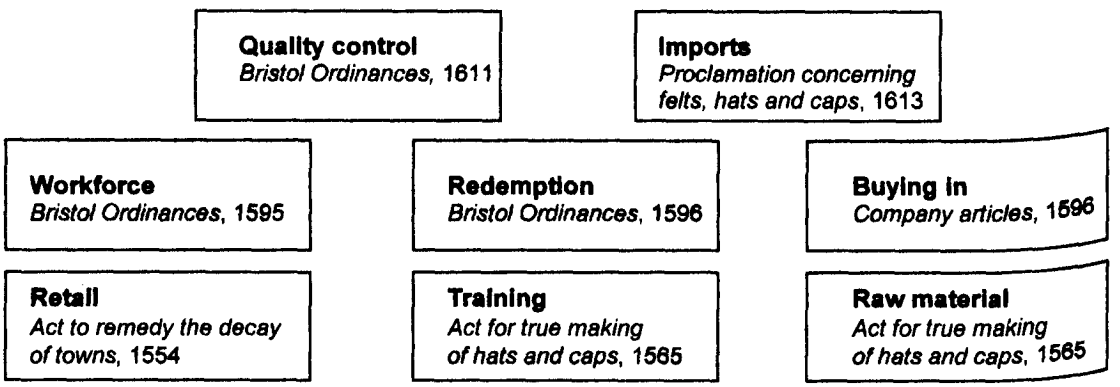

Figure 24: The legal bricks protecting Bristol's felt hat monopoly.

Foundation bricks were already placed by national legislation. In 1554, to arrest the decay of 'corporate towns', the government banned those working outside of city boundaries ('Retaile, and Wollen Clothe Lynnen Clothe Haberdashe wares Grocery ware Mercerye wares) from selling within except

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[10] BRO, 08156/1.
[11] William J Baumol and Alan S Blinder, *Microeconomics: Principles and Policies* (1979, reprint Princeton, Thomson 2006), pp. 217-230. Richard A Posner, *Natural Monopoly and Its Regulation* (Washington, DC, Cato Institute 1999). For a European perspective of this time, Vernon A Mund, *Open Markets, An Essential of Free Enterprise* (New York, Harper and Brothers 1948), pp. 24-27.
[12] Frontispiece map.

in open fairs.[13] Controlled training of 'hatmakers or feltmakers' was specifically covered by the *Statute of Artificers* in 1563.[14] London's feltmakers successfully lobbied for further civic legitimacy and received an industry-specific act in 1565.[15] Although intended in part to protect the nation's cappers, the act also 'provided the feltmakers with a profitable future'.[16] As with the *Statute of Artificers*, each existing hatmaker who was a 'householder, apprentice, covenant-servant or journeyman' was given civic status; when in business he was limited to two apprentices whose training was to last seven years; and, outside London, the power of search was given through civic officers to Bristol and 'all other cities and towns corporate'. Quality Spanish wools, like merino, were restricted to 'masters and journeymen' in the cities.[17] The importance of Spanish wool imports attracted court patentees and a monopoly managed from London.[18] To maintain the monopoly, it was important to decry 'felts and hats of English wool instead of foreign wools imported by them which are alone fit for that purpose'.[19] The best wools, while

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[13] *Decay of corporate towns*, 1554.

[14] Section XXVI: Clothmaker, fuller, shearman, weaver, tailor, or shoemaker, *An Act touching divers Orders for Artificers, Labourers, Servants of Husbandry and Apprentices*, (5 Elizabeth, c. 4 (1563). See Margaret Gay Davies, *The Enforcement of English Apprenticeship, A Study in Applied Mercantilism 1563-1642* (Cambridge, USA, Harvard University Press 1956), fn. 26, p. 8. The other early authority is O Jocelyn Dunlop, *English Apprenticeship and Child Labour, A History* (London, Fisher Unwin 1912), General Introduction, Introduction and Chapters I-IV.

[15] 8 Elizabeth, c. 11 (1565). This act was renewed in 1604, and a copy was sent to Bristol (*HCJ*, 31/3/1604), Vol. 1, pp. 160-161.

[16] Weinstein, *Feltmakers*, p. 7.

[17] Also, *The Bill touching on Buying of Spanish or Ostriche, Wools for Hats or Felts* (*HCJ*, 8/3/1563), Vol. 1, p. 68.

[18] In London in 1577, a grant for the 'only bringing in of Spanish woolles' was made to Dr Hector Nunez and on its expiry in 1594 to Sir Michael Stanhope. Stanhope was a groom to the privy chamber and received his privilege for twenty years 'of bringing in Spanish wool for making Spanish felts, paying 4s 2d a cwt. custom' (Doquet, *Calendar of State Papers*, Elizabeth, Vol. 250, 9/1594), pp. 554-559, available www.british-history.ac.uk, accessed 2008.

[19] Petition of the Spanish and Eastland merchants against 'certain feltmakers and haberdashers' (*Calendar of State Papers Domestic*, 12/1617), pp. 501-510.

affordable to Bristol's haberdashers, were thus distanced from the pocket of any independent villager. Coarser native wools were left to the feltmakers and upon these they built their later lauded skills for lower quality felt hood manufacture.[20]

The city issued two new ordinances when the Company was formed which gave additional powers to the haberdashers and others. The first forbade the employment of outside workers, 'the avoydinge of strangers out of the citty'.[21] This had the twin effects of excluding village workers and of stopping them gaining citizenship by work and residence: 'noe artificer or handycraftesman within this cittie or liberties thereof shall at any time ... retayne or sett on worke any forryner or straunger'.[22] Perhaps some outsiders bought their way in, for, a year later, another ordinance banned the use of redemption to gain the 'liberties of this cittie' except 'such as are artificers or doe or shall use manuell occupacion'.[23] This closed the door to all but the very few, richer village felt masters. Both of these ordinances were still in operation at the beginning of the seventeenth century.[24]

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[20] Weinstein, *Feltmakers*, pp. 6-7; Chapter 3. The arrival of Spanish wool for hatmaking near Manchester is dated much later. Aiken wrote in 1795 that hat manufacture was much improved because 'at first the felt-makers only wrought the coarse sheep's wool, and it was not until about sixty years since that they used the fine Spanish, or the goat's wool from Germany, or that from the Levant, which is a species of goat's wool, though commonly called camel's hair' (J A Aiken, *Description of the Country from thirty to forty miles around Manchester*, London, Stockdale 1795), pp. 161-162.

[21] 'The quote is in the margin' (Stanford, *Ordinances*), fn. 63, p. 99.

[22] The fine was 8s 6d for each week the offence continued.

[23] The fine for an attempt at illegal redemption was £100 (Stanford, *Ordinances*), fn. 64v, pp. 101-102.

[24] Stanford, *Ordinances*, fn. (unnumbered), p. xvi.

At establishment, the Company moved quickly to collect the city's revenue by controlling membership, the activities of non members, and all buying in. This was much in the mood of the time. Gross noted that the 'only part of the charter now observed with strictness by the merchants is the care they take to elect none into their society who are not already freemen of the city'.[25] Walker claimed bluntly that [a Company's] 'primary economic function was the potential to control entry to their trade through apprenticeship, thus regulating the supply of labour'.[26]

The Company's first five Articles in 1596, the first entries in the first volume of its minute book, sought to restrict the entry rights of 'foreigners' by controlling the number of hats they carried and their quality.[27] If that was not successful, fines either levelled the pricing or, at least, raised revenue. Every quarter day, haberdashers were required to bring their 'true account' books to the master and be examined under oath. False books or refusing the oath were met by fines of ten shillings. Some haberdashers supplied village contacts with quality wools for contract work. Haberdashers who bought felt from any 'stranger hatmaker' was to pay the Hall 12d for every dozen of *men's Spanish wools*, 8d for *large Estridge*, and 3d for every dozen of *boy's coloured*. No feltmaker was to 'buy any hats of any foreigner or free man to sell them again ... not to the intent to forestall or make a dearth'. Merchants, grocers and mercers who

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[25] Gross, *Gild Merchant*, Vol. 2, p. 27.
[26] Walker, *Guild control*, p. 1.
[27] 18/1/1595/6, p. 1 (BRO, 08156/1). Page 2 is blank.

bought hats were brought to the Hall and made to pay 'as the haberdashers do'.

By May, foreigners were quietly taking hats to the homes and shops of the haberdashers.[28] For this evasion of taxation at 'common Hall', the devious haberdashers were threatened with a fine of ten shillings a dozen hats. Next January, some members who did take their 'foreign' hats to Hall, as required, were then not paying their fines.[29] Feltmakers had sales curtailed until fines were paid; members were instructed not to buy from anyone who was 'indebted to the Hall for such quarterage or other income'. Banned from receiving foreigners at home, haberdashers began travelling to the villages to buy 'hatcapes'.[30] This was decreed the only occasion when the haberdasher was allowed to buy away from the Hall, but they still had to pay 2d for every dozen they bought.[31]

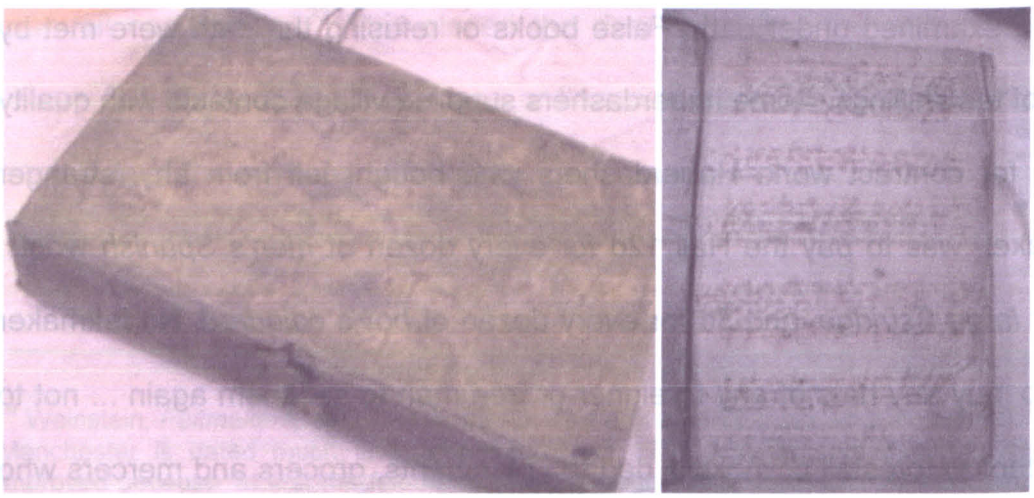

Figure 25: The first volume of the minute book, 1595-1673 and the first articles, 1596.

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[28] Article, 17/5/1596 (BRO, 08156/1), p. 3.
[29] Articles, 10/1/1597 (BRO, 08156/1), p. 3.
[30] Hatcapes were felt hoods made in the villages and bought to be 'finished' into a hat in the city.
[31] Article, 16/1/1597 (BRO, 08156/1), p. 3.

Someone leaked the company's private deliberations so the Company agreed that those discovered making 'any communication that was talked of in the common Hall concerning any of the same Company shall pay to fine 10s'.[32] Internal squabbling was not unusual in Bristol companies at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Promises, oaths, pawns, rewards and fines abounded among the city's soapmakers as they sought to regulate prices. 'Underselling was rampant, as is shown by the increasingly binding undertakings the members laid upon each other.'[33]

The Company's articles were not approved as ordinances by the city's common council, as required by law, until late in 1610.[34] The quality of drafting between the articles and the thirty-six ordinances formally incorporated two months' later in 1611 showed great improvement. The Company's formal power over citizens was limited by an ever present need to refer to the mayor. Swanson saw that 'craft guilds of artisans were agents of the city council and could themselves have no independent power, given the economic dominance of the mercantile elites'.[35] The ordinances concentrated all the feltmakers' frustration with the villagers and other foreigners into just

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[32] Article, 14/2/1597 (BRO, 08156/1), p. 5.
[33] Matthews, *Soapmakers*, p. 3.
[34] Bristol Minutes of Common Council, fn. 17(v) 15/11/1610; confirmed 17/1/1611 (BRO, 04369/1). In a charter of 1499, the Mayor, Recorder and other Aldermen of the borough were made, collectively and severally, justices of the peace *ex officio* (H A Cronne, edited, *Bristol Charters*, 1378-1499, BRS, Vol. XI, 1945), p. 164. This ensured compliance with an act of Henry VI requiring new ordinances to be submitted to justices and, thereby, gave the municipality the authority over apprenticeship management (15 Henry VI, c. 6). By 1507, any burgess of the trade of merchant, grocer or mercer was permitted to receive apprentices for seven years, or longer if agreed. See the first book of *Bristol Ordinances* (BRO, 04272; not selected by Stanford, *Ordinances*).
[35] Heather Swanson, 'The Illusion of Economic Structure: Craft Guilds in Late Medieval Towns', *Past & Present*, No. 121, November 1988, p. 47.

three tough strictures.[36] No foreigner could become a feltmaker or haberdasher, or sell hats or caps, in Bristol until they were free of the company 'upon pain of forfeiture of £40'. Foreigners could only be employed by licence which was to be followed within twenty days by a testimonial of service and good behaviour 'upon pain of 6s 8d'. Foreigners were 'graciously allowed' to come one day a week into the city with hats or 'hat caps' to sell, but only after a charged assessment by a Company officer.[37] Toll evasions were serious: 'for every hat or cap so bought 12d'. Limitation to a weekly visit was not onerous and probably as much access as a craftsman working up to ten miles away could manage.[38]

Quality control was the penultimate brick in the wall. The right of search was a powerful tool in the hands of the Company and two ordinances underwrote the authority. The masters and wardens were to view and search four times a year 'for bad felt and not well coloured' and to take the examples of poor workmanship before the mayor and aldermen. The searches were deemed fundamental; the masters and wardens were to be fined 6s 8d if they failed to carry them out.[39] Immediately, the city council was asked to deal with a refractory feltmaker. The man bought several parcels of felts, but refused to let the Company's officers inspect them and resold the goods before they had

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[36] Ordinances 15, 29, 31 (BRO, 04272).
[37] 'Graciously allowed' is a phrase used by John Latimer, *The Annals of Bristol in the Sixteenth & Seventeenth Centuries*, Vol. 1 (Bristol, private 1900/1908, reprint Bath, Kingsmead 1970), p. 17th/26. The charges were 3d for every dozen felts and 1d for every dozen hat caps.
[38] The alternative for the village feltmakers to selling in Bristol was for the goods to be 'hawked around the countryside on the backs of pedlars, or stowed by chapmen into pack-saddles, or stacked in bales and loaded on barges' (Thirsk, *Policy*), p. 3.
[39] Ordinances 12, 13 (BRO, 04369/1).

been approved as marketable. He was 'so contumacious and discourteous to the magistrates when they admonished him' that he was given six months to consider 'the enormity of his conduct'. When he reappeared as 'stiff-necked' as before, he was disenfranchised and 'thenceforth treated as a foreigner'.[40]

Two years later, as the final brick, the feltmakers received a royal proclamation banning imports of felts, hats and caps from overseas, including the right to request a stop to any landing in England.[41] This proclamation was the first in a series of actions taken over the seventeenth century to control French imports by ban and fine.[42]

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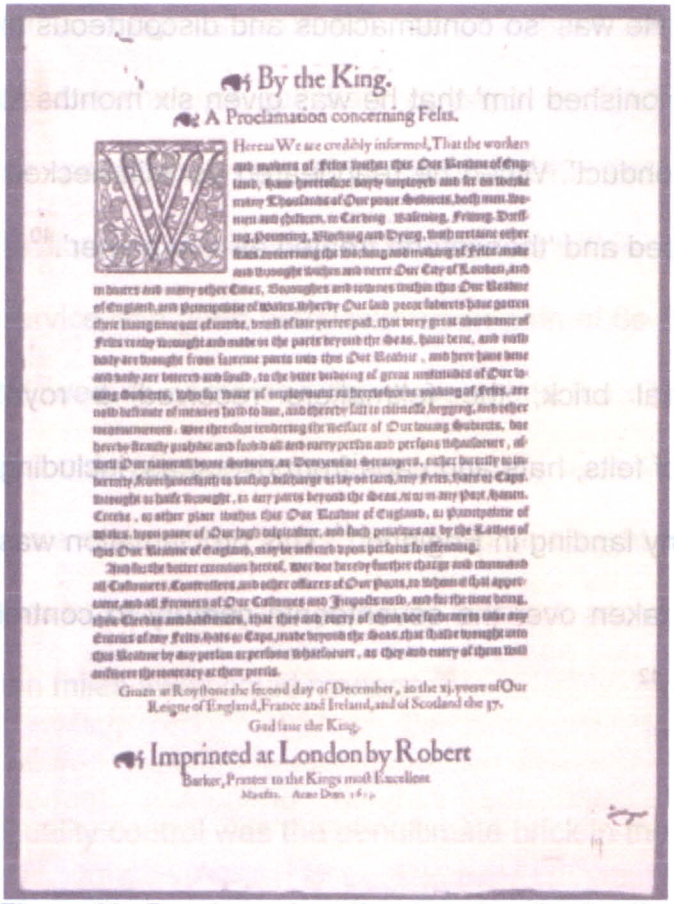
[40] Latimer, *Annals*, p. 17th/376.

[41] Proclamation, 2/12/1613, at Roystone, I No. 1139, cited in R Steele, *Bibliography of Royal Proclamations 1485-1714* (OUP 1910); original in the Henry E Huntington Library and Art Gallery. Also Lipson, *Economic History*, Vol. 3, fn. 5, p. 14; J F Larkin and P L Hughes, edited, *Stuart Royal Proclamations*, Vol. 1, James 1, 1603-1625, 134 (Oxford 1973), pp. 299-300.

[42] The 1613 Proclamation was reissued ten years later, 17/9/1623, at Theobalds (Larkin and Hughes, *Stuart Royal Proclamations*, 246), Vol. 1, pp. 581-582. Fines were placed on imported felts and hatbands in 1644 (C H Firth and R S Rait, edited, *Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum, 1642-1660*, 1911), pp. 63-68 (accessed www.british-history.ac.uk, available 2010). This became a complete ban (*An Act for the Relief of Feltmakers and Hatbandmakers, against Aliens and Strangers Importing Such Wares to the hinderance of their Manufacturers*) and promoted search and seizure in 'the day time at Fairs and Markets, Shops open, and Warehouses' (*Acts and Ordinances of the Interregnum*), pp. 242-244. Also, *HCJ*, 5/9/1649, Vol. 6, pp. 290. A further petition in 1670 asked for 'setting a Rate on French Hats, notwithstanding the Prohibition of bringing them in' (*HCJ*, 25/11/1670), Vol. 9, p. 170.



By the King.

A Proclamation concerning Felts.

Whereas We are credibly informed, That the workers and makers of Felts within this Our Realme of England, have heretofore beene employed and set on worke many Thousands of Our poore Subiects, both men, women and children, in Carding, Balling, Frizing, Dyeing, Pounsing, Working and Dying, with certaine other feats concerning the working and making of Felts, made and wrought within and neere Our City of London, and in diuers and many other Cities, Boroughes and townes within this Our Realme of England, and Principalitie of Wales, whereby Our said poore Subiects haue gotten their liuing euer out of memorie, vntill of late yeeres past, that very great abundance of Felts ready wrought and made on the parts beyond the Seas, haue beene, and daily are brought from seuerall parts into this Our Realme, and there haue bene and daily are bought and sold, to the verie vndoing of great multitudes of Our louing Subiects, who for want of employment in the exercising and working of Felts, are vnto diuerse of meanes laid to lie, and therefore fall to extreame beggerie, and other inconueniences. Wee therefore tendering the welfare of Our louing Subiects, doe hereby straightly prohibite and forbid all and euery person and persons whatsoeuer, all sort of Our naturall borne Subiects, as Denizens strangers, other then such as shall hereafter from henceforth vnto vs shall purchase or haue Letters Patents for the same, to bring or cause to be brought, or any parte beyond the Seas, to vs or into any Port, Hauen, Creeke, or other place within this Our Realme of England, as Principalitie of Wales, vpon paine of Our high indignation, and such penalties as by the Lawes of this Our Realme of England, may be inflicted vpon persons so offending.

And for the better execution hereof, Wee doe hereby further charge and commaund all Customers, Controllers, and other officers of Our Ports, to whom it shall appertaine, and all Farmers of Our Customes and Impositions, and for the time being, their Clerkes and Deputies, that they and euery of them doe forbeare to take any Entries of any Felts, Hats or Caps, made beyond the Seas, that shall be brought into this Realme by any person or persons whatsoeuer, as they and euery of them will answere the contrary at their perils.

Given at Roythorne the second day of December, in the xj. yeere of Our Reigne of England, France and Ireland, and of Scotland the xlvj.

God saue the King.

Imprinted at London by Robert Barker, Printer to the Kings most Excellent Maiestie. Anno Dom. 1613.

Figure 26: Royal proclamation banning the landing of all felts, hats and caps made beyond the seas, 1613.

An escalation of the struggle to control the villagers followed seven years later in an episode not mentioned in the minute book. In 1618, a petition was sent to the Privy Council by the haberdashers of London and York, supported by the companies of feltmakers of Chester, Bristol and Worcester.[43] They complained that 'greate numbers of feltmakers (most of them being unskillfull worckmen, and such as never served out their apprenticeshippe according to the statute) have of late spredd themselves in diverse remoate places, and have there sett up the making of hattes or felltes of English, Wellch and Irish wolless, whereof it is not possible that a good and serviceable hat can be

[43] *Acts of the Privy Council of England, 1617-1619* (HMSO 1929), 25/5/1618, pp. 149-150, referencing the *Privy Council Registers*, Vol. 29, pp. 395-396.

made'.[44] The companies asked for the appointment of 'honest and fit persons' to search for and to seize these illegal manufactures, binding over the makers and sellers, and sending half the resulting income to the crown. This right would extend the power of the Company beyond Bristol's city limits. The Privy Council agreed to set up an enquiry into a 'matter worthie of consideracion'. This type of request was not unusual; guilds made many attempts to suppress village combinations 'either directly or with the help of Parliament'.[45] The petition was most likely driven by the feltmakers in the capital, where cheap country manufacture, especially south of the Thames, was a constant complaint as a threat to their high-priced monopoly.[46] Bristol's haberdashers now wanted twin powers to control the village feltmakers through both a legal civic monopoly and through the right of invasive search and confiscation.[47]

Probably the approach to the Privy Council failed; there is no record of its success or of groups of Company agents scouring the villages for 'unserviceable' hats. Pressure was reapplied rather to malpractice within the city and prosecutions followed of 'any man that makes hats either in England or Wales contrary to the statute'. In 1625, the Company's masters set up a

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[44] This argument was long-standing in London as the Feltmakers Company sought to control those set up outside the walls. 8 Elizabeth c. 11 (1565) was reworked in 1604 mainly to apply 'more Restraint of unskilful and deceivable Workmanship [in hats and felts] to the Wrong of all Sorts of People of the Realm' (*HLJ*, 14/6/1604), Vol. 2, pp. 319-320. Also, a petition of 1636 by two Gloucestershire clothiers against the Feltmakers Company for 'of long time there have been great abuses in making beavers, felts, hats, and caps by corrupt mixtures, false workmanship, and vending old for new ('Charles 1, 1636', *Calendar of State Papers Domestic*), Vol. 329, pp. 65-83.

[45] G D H Cole, *A Short History of the British Working Class Movement 1789-1925, Vol. 1 1789-1848* (London, Allen and Unwin 1925), p. 25. Margaret D Fuller, *West Country Friendly Societies* (Lingfield, University of Reading 1964), p. 3.

[46] Unwin, *Gilds*, p. 254. Archer, *Haberdashers*, Chapter 5, pp. 56-70.

[47] Rogers, *Craft Gilds*, p. 151.

mechanism to recoup 'what damage soever they shall sustain' on the 'count day' in legal suits initiated against miscreants.[48] Relationships between city and village must have been at a serious low and there was no immediate resolution. In 1668, the Common Council resumed the attack on all foreigners carrying on trade in the city. 'An ordinance was also fulminated against all interloping persons carrying on arts and trades, setting forth that divers persons by subtle and sinister means were defrauding the charters, to the great hurt of the freemen.'[49] The civic powers 'tried in vain to arrest ... to save the urban monopoly', and 'when they sought to legislate for those who were not members', it was the beginning of the end.[50] The figures agree. Membership of the Company, at a peak of over sixty in 1628, began a steep and relentless decline.

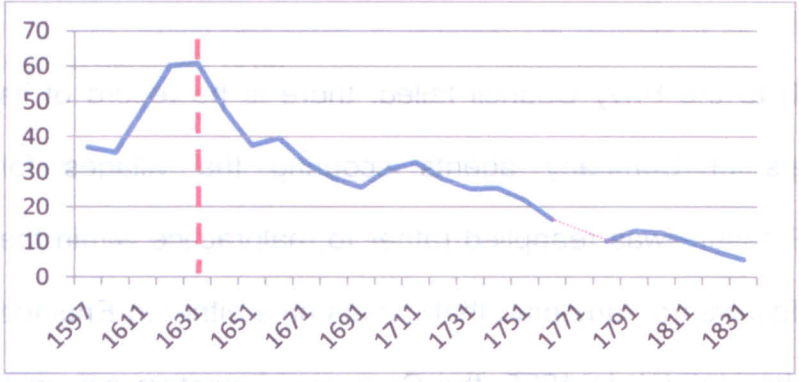

Figure 27: Membership of the Company, 1597-1831.[51]

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[48] Article, 5/8/1625 (BRO, 08156/1), p. 324.
[49] Latimer, *Annals*, p. 341.
[50] Peter Kriedte, Hans Medick, Jürgen Schlumbohm, translated Beate Schempp, *Industrialization before Industrialization, Rural Industry in the Genesis of Capitalism* (Göttingen 1977 reprint CUP, 1981), p. 13. Gross, *Gild Merchant*; *Westminster Review*, 1891, cited James Thompson, *The reception of Lujo Brentano's thought in Britain, 1870-1910* (Centre for History and Economics, King's College, Cambridge, Working Paper 1998), p. 22.
[51] BRO, 08156/1-2. The figures are decennial means. Membership numbers were not recorded for the 'dotted' period between 1771-1780.

Utility and weight of numbers presumably brought an accommodation as this is the last mention of 'foreigners' in the minute book for almost one hundred years. The Company focussed intermittent attention into the eighteenth century on recalcitrant city hatmakers and on careless trade interlopers from other regions. A number of cases occur in 1731, 1740 and 1763 and, by the timing, suggest a concern over the Company's declining power and a wish to reassert authority. In the first case, complaint was made 'in our common Hall that persons not free of the Company have taken on them to carry on the trade of buying and selling hats in the City of Bristol to the prejudice of our said Company'. Two masters, Thomas Evans and Meredith Davies, were instructed to proceed against Joseph Turner, living on the 'Key' in Bristol. In 1740, the matter concerned Stephen Willets 'not being Free of the City, living in Horse Fair, Bristol'. Action was taken in 1763 by five masters empowered 'to spend our public stock' against unnamed persons.[52]

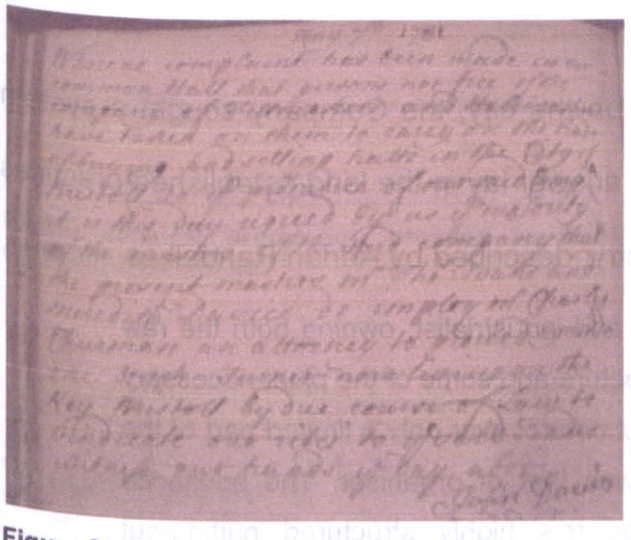

Figure 28: Complaint against Joseph Turner for selling hats while not free, 1731.

[52] Articles 7/5/1731, p. 135; 19/4/1740, p. 136; 23/2/1763, p. 265 (BRO, 08156/2).

As the heat drained from the fervour of protecting civic rights, a settled working commercial solution developed over the next fifty years. Fisher saw 'experiments in monopoly', like that which operated between the Company and the villages, as an 'imaginative attempt to revive and adapt dying controls by bringing the passive investor and the rural manufacturer within the system'. Failure of these schemes was because of their inherent 'fatal rigidity'.[53] The industry had grown rapidly and the villages provided vital manpower for first-stage felt hood production. Additional capital was needed to fund the purchase of raw material from overseas, increasingly complex manufacturing processes, and more sophisticated retail outlets. This growth produced two-way reliance and danger. D C Coleman thought that civic craft controls worked best in a static economy.[54] If the labour supply or the demand for the product or service grew, 'pressure for entry would mount or production expand outside' leading to a 'gradual and piecemeal decline in power and authority'.

While largely maintaining its grip on the city, the Company sought a system for working with the villagers. The answer lay in the long-established practices of the clothier in the woollen industry, described by Adrian Randall as

> an amalgamation of merchant and industrialist, owning both the raw material throughout the manufacture and some of the plant necessary for production, but having direct control over only a limited part of the process. Above all, his role was that of organiser. The advanced division of labour created by this highly structured putting-out

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[53] F J Fisher, 'Some Experiments in Company Organisation in the Early Seventeenth Century', *The Economic History Review*, Vol. 4, No. 2, April 1933, pp. 177-194, cited in Walker, *Guild control*, p. 15.
[54] Coleman, *Tudor and Stuart England*, pp. 20-21.

operation ensured the existence of a skilled and specialised workforce.[55]

The workers were craftsman – 'persons who have no property in the goods they manufacture' - and fiercely defensive of their perceived rights and status.[56] Josiah Tucker called the clothier the 'paymaster'; and so, for the Bristol felt trade, one can replace 'clothier' by 'haberdasher'.[57]

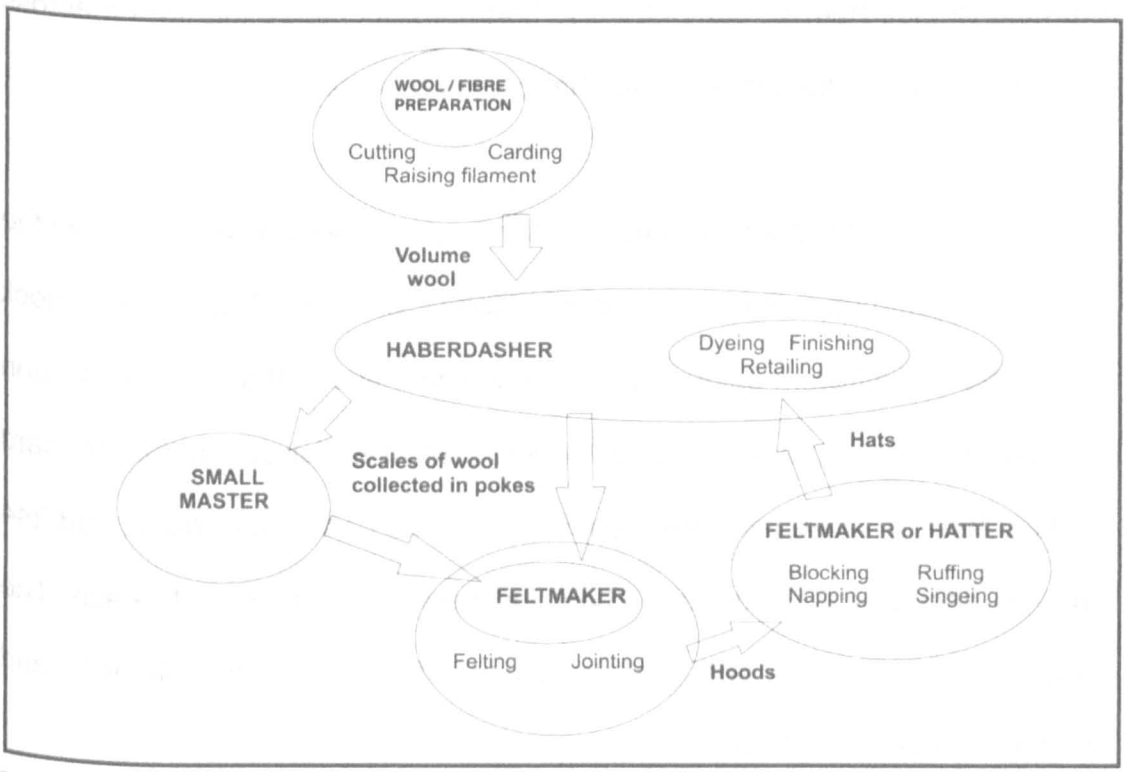

Figure 29: Hat production process in South Gloucestershire, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[58]

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[55] Randall, *Luddites*, p. 18.

[56] *Report of the Minutes of Evidence Taken before the Select Committee on the Woollen Clothiers to Consider the State of the Woollen Manufacture* (House of Commons 268), 1806, Vol. 3. Also Randall, *Luddites*, p. 35.

[57] Josiah Tucker, 'Instructions for travellers: A Plan for improving in the moral and political Theory of Trade and Taxes, by means of Travelling', 1757, in *Josiah Tucker: A Selection from His Economic and Political Writings*, introduction Robert Livingston Schuyler (1931, reprint New York, AMS Press 1966), p. 244.

[58] Based on figures by Randall, *Luddites*, pp. 17, 22. Also Tucker, 'Instructions for travellers', p. 244.

The villagers, perhaps, did not see a wholly 'successful experiment' as they became pieceworkers subject to the dictates of Bristol's money men. While these seventeenth-century craftsmen controlled the manufacturing process, they ceased to be independent producers who owned their materials and the product of their labour. Raw wool and fur was collected from delivery wagons sent weekly from Bristol.[59] It was a 'common sight to see hatters going from or returning to their homes, carrying large bags or *padding pokes* swung across their shoulders, containing either felt hat bodies or wool and fur'.[60]

Four Bristol haberdashers' probates, one from the sixteenth century, show the shades of operation in the early years.[61] Robert Clement, 1589, had in stock 444 felt hats of different colours and quality, some worth 10s, and a collection of hat bands, strings, and taffeta, *cypresse* and silver for decoration. Richard Shutter, 1637, in his eight-room premises over and behind his *shopp*, had 244 hats; his decorations included feathers for the new fashions at 4d each. The shop had candlesticks and looking glasses for customers. Clement and Shutter were simple retailers.

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[59] 'The shopkeepers of Bristol (many of whom are wholesale dealers) keep up a great Inland Trade, and have Waggoners, Carriers and Riders, as the Londoners ... Waggons from Bristol start at *The Swan*, Maryport Street: John New to Frenchay, Frampton and Winterbourne, in and out every day (Matthews's *New Bristol Directory*, 1793-4), pp. 38, 97. Also Kenneth Morgan, *Country Carriers in the Bristol Region in the Late Nineteenth Century*, No. 64, BBTHA, 1986, p. 2, citing Alan Everitt, 'Country Carriers in the Nineteenth Century', *Journal of Transport History*, new series, IV, 1977, pp. 181-184.

[60] *HG*, H Whittaker, 'Reminiscences of the Felt Hatting Industry', 1910.

[61] Appendix 15: *Hatter wills, probates and sources, 1588-1889*; 193 records. Also S Lang and M McGregor, *Tudor Wills Proved in Bristol 1546-1603* (BRS, Vol. 44, 1993); E and S George, *Guide to the Probate Inventories of the Bristol Deanery of the Diocese of Bristol (1542-1804)* (BRS and BGAS 1988); E and S George, edited, *Bristol Probate Inventories, Part 1 1542-1650, Part 2 1657-1689, Part 3 1690-1804* (BRS, Vol. 54, 2002; Vol. 57, 2005; Vol. 60, 2008).

The stock of Edward Cooke and Thomas Dawes, both 1687, brings the relationships with the villages into focus.[62] Cooke had over 600 hats, sixty-three of them 'moth-eaten'; Dawes had 3,000 ready for sale. Cook had no wool stock; Dawes had a considerable amount of English wool: a parcel of fell wool, 389 stones of wool at 9-10s a stone, 255 stones of lamb's wool at 10s, and a parcel of white show *flox*. Among his imported wool was 200 pounds of Spanish at 9d a pound; *Polland*, fourteen pounds at 14d; and *Estridge*, 168 pounds at 7d, with 300 pounds of a coarse variety at 2½d.[63] Dawes was also well stocked with dyeing material, mostly imported: redwood, sumach, copperas, and chipped logwood. Both had good supplies of bow strings, Dawes some 200, but neither had feltmakers' bows. These seven-foot bows were not items to be overlooked in a professional inventory. As shown by his debtor's list, Cooke operated a sub-contract system, employing independent feltmakers from Sodbury who received breakable gut bow strings for their own bows, but supplied their own local wool.[64] Dawes was a more powerful individual, supplying wool and bow strings to village feltmakers and maintaining control of dyeing, finishing and retail in a classic *putting-out* system.

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[62] Dawes' probate, 6/5/1687 (TNA, PROB 4/18051).

[63] 'Fell wool' was taken from butchered sheep; 'fleece or flock wool' from live animals. Flock wool was a Bristol import for over a century: *Trynyte* of Brystoll, master John Water, at Bridgwater, five stone flock wool, 23/3/1539 (TNA, E 122 200/2); *Nicholas* of Bristowe, master Bartholomew White, 22/1/1543 (TNA, E 122 43/14). Polonia Wool from Poland (Cox and Dannehl, *Traded Goods*).

[64] This discovery explains Chipping Sodbury's *Hatter's Lane*, whose origin has puzzled local historians.

In the eighteenth century, the *putting-out* system dominated and the South Gloucestershire men 'passed into the condition of lifelong wage-earners'.[65] The village hatters were dependent on the deliveries and collections of Bristol wholesalers. When Prime Minister Pitt threatened a sixpence tax on all hats in 1784, 116 petitioners from Frampton Cotterell and Winterbourne described themselves as

> persons of low situation in Life [who] for many Years have endeavoured to get Bread for themselves and families in the Manufacturing of Hatts'. The new tax would deter the city haberdashers and 'Utterly Ruin ye Manufactory of such low prised Hatts and subject many Hundreds of Families to become chargeable to their respective Parishes as whole Families Women & Children are frequently employed therein. That the wholesale dealer at the present time Generally take all such Hatts as the Poor Manufacturer can Weekely make and pay Ready money for same which if the intended duty takes place cannot in future be expected as the weight of such Duty will in all Human probability prevent the wholesale Dealer from keeping any material Stock by him and of consequence render it Impossible for the poor Manufacturer to continue his Trade.[66]

With the control of the city haberdashers understood, it is now appropriate to focus on the hat trade's second great monopoly. It was a monopoly controlled by the men and had its roots in Elizabethan legislation and flowed as an unintended consequence from the success of the *putting-out* system. The statute of artificers of 1563, re-engineered for the headware trades in 1565, provided a limit of two apprentices for each establishment. Sidney and

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[65] J M Ludlow, 'Trade Societies and the Social Science Association', *Macmillan's Magazine*, 1860-1861, edited David Masson, Part First, pp. 315-318; taken up by the Webbs, *Trade Unionism*, p. 26.
[66] TNA, T 1/610/409-410. Appendix 16: *Petition, feltmakers of Frampton Cotterell, 1784.*

Beatrice Webb named the limit as 'the restriction of numbers' and claimed that here belonged the 'ancient Trade Union prescriptions as to Apprenticeship, the exclusion of new competitors from a trade, and the assertion of a vested interest'.[67]

For the men, the skills of the trainee were the responsibility of the craft. The quality of hoods they produced was their pride. Haberdashers could employ whomever they wanted as long as they had served a true apprenticeship, but any new trained employees had to come from the apprenticeship system run by the feltmakers. The villagers had the ability, continued unchanged in essence from the seventeenth century and exercised vigorously into the middle of the nineteenth century, to limit the entry of youngsters into the 'knowledge and mystery' of the hatter's craft.

By the later eighteenth century, hat manufactories in London had grown considerably in concentration and power; over a dozen employed several hundred men. Ubiquity, fashion, rising disposable income, and booming exports presented considerable opportunity.[68] Hats were the 'universal head covering, even for working men'.[69] As the masters sought to grow their businesses to meet demand, their expansionist plans were often thwarted. The men prevented manufacturers from flooding the labour market with half-

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[67] Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *Industrial Democracy* (1897, Private for the students of the Workers' Educational Association, 1902 edition, reprint 1913), p. 704.
[68] Corner, 'Tyranny', pp.153-178.
[69] F Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, edited David McLellan (OUP, 1993), p. 79.

trained opportunists and then casting the better paid onto a temporary scrap heap when business turned sour. From the middle of the eighteenth century, the hatters were sufficiently well organised to act nationally. They would lay down their bows and strike with barely a day's delay if they felt their rights were threatened. If the owners replied with *knobsticks*, violence quickly followed.[70] This was always a tinder box waiting for a spark.

Many of the older masters, raised from the ranks, had some sympathy with the men, but second and third generation owners of the family firms did not. They were less steeped in the *mystery* and schemed to bypass and, if necessary, to break the power of their workers.[71] All manufacturers, even when angry, were fearful of confrontation caused by employing additional apprentices or *foul* men.[72] Following a petition in 1777, London manufacturers gave evidence to a parliamentary Select Committee considering 'pay, hours and apprenticeships in hat manufactory'.[73] The manufacturers claimed they were in difficulty because of

> the great scarcity of Journeymen in the Trade and of their repeated Demands for an Advance of Wages to unreasonable Prices, and to lessen their usual hours of work; and, in order to enforce a Compliance with such Demands, they have entered into a Combination ... and prevented divers of the said Manufacturers from having or taking Apprentices.

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[70] *Knobsticks* were men from outside the union used as strike breakers.
[71] CA, letters of 1820-1835 by Thomas Christy and others.
[72] *Foul men were from outside of the union.*
[73] HCJ, Vol. 36, 5-6/2/1777, 17 George III, c. 55, p. 119.

Counter petitions flooded in from around the country including one from the 'Masters and Journeymen Felt Makers ... resident in and about the City of Bristol ... who had lawfully served their apprenticeship'. The Bristol men noted that the proposed act would discard the limit of two apprentices, beside their own sons, and declared that

> by reason of the great Number of Journeymen in the said Trade, many of them are at present wholly unemployed therein, and are obliged to work in Coal Pits, and to serve as Labourers in other Employments; and that, since the Year 1774, there have been 1,325 Men relieved in the City of Bristol, and County of Gloucester, seeking for Employ; and if the said Acts should be repealed, and the Felt Maker be at liberty to take what Numbers of Apprentices they shall think proper, a much greater Number of Journeymen will be out of employ.[74]

The masters won comprehensively and the act which resulted fundamentally changed the legal relationship between master and journeyman.[75] The power of journeymen was lessened by allowing widespread apprenticeships and by forbidding hatter combinations. Attending a hatters' meeting, and other activities, was punishable by three months' hard labour.[76] This act preceded the Combination Act of 1799 by twenty-two years, and, by thirty-seven years, the repeal in 1814 of the apprentice clauses of the *Statute of Artificers*.[77]

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[74] HCJ, Vol. 36, 21-22/3/1777, 17 George III, c. 55, p. 307.

[75] *An Act for Better Regulating the Hat Manufactory*, 17 George III, c. 55 (1777). A second act, passed at the same time, dealt with theft and bugging – see later (*An Act for More Effectual Preventing Frauds and Abuses*, 17 George III, c. 56).

[76] John V Orth, *Combination and Conspiracy, A Legal History of Trade Unionism 1721-1906* (Oxford, Clarendon Press 1991), p. 18.

[77] Combination Act, 39 George III, c. 81 (1799). T K Derry, 'The Repeal of the Apprenticeship Clauses of the Statute of Apprentices', *The Economic History Review*, Vol. 3, No. 1, January 1931, pp. 67-87.

The men ignored the new apprenticeship regulations and remained wedded to their own bye-laws. In 1824, when a Select Committee looked at abolition of the Combinations Laws, it seemed little had changed. John Bowler, a leading London hat manufacturer, explained that 'according to the laws of the land I could [take more than two apprentices], according to the regulations of the trade I could not'. New blood was provided by the 'little masters in the country' (and here Bowler was talking principally about Gloucestershire) as 'every person who is a master, that has no journeymen, can keep apprentices provided he has served his time with the trade'.[78] Another manufacturer, George Ravenhill, said that the men 'certainly do object to the masters taking more than two apprentices; and such masters as do take more they denominate a *foul* shop, and those masters cannot get *fair* men to work at their shops'.[79] Journeyman hatter John Watkins claimed that the masters acquiesced in the restriction to two apprentices until 1820 when a wages strike resulted in them resolving across the whole country that 'they would take three apprentices or more, if they chose'. Watkins estimated *foul* men at 10% of the workforce, but if any *foul* men were taken on, or more than two apprentices registered, 'the manufactory will become disturbed, and the men will leave their employ'.[80] During a strike over wages and apprentices in 1834, the London hatters' union was shocked to learn that the Elizabethan law from

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[78] Evidence of John Bowler, hat manufacturer, of Nelson Square, London (TNA, Second Report, Select Committee on State of Law in United Kingdom respecting ... Combination of Workmen, 1/3/1824), pp. 86-90.
[79] Evidence of George Ravenhill, Second Report, p. 79. *Fair* men were members of trade combinations who had served an approved apprenticeship and were, therefore, not *foul*.
[80] Evidence of John Watkins, Third Report, pp. 152-153.

which it claimed authority, specifically the right to limit each manufacturer, no matter how large, to just two apprentices, had been long repealed.[81]

Conclusions

There was a dichotomy between the maintenance of civic superiority and the recognition of an independent and local workforce that sought wholesale outlets. The village feltmakers needed access to the city's haberdashers, and this was formalised and taxed from 1595, and to the city's markets, for which weekly rights were given in 1611. The rise of the Bristol Company was a promised reward for revenue collectors. The Company's legal monopoly was initially a seventeenth century success despite the haberdashers' need to plug holes that were largely dug by their own members. But success brought more 'foreign craftsmen amassed in expanding suburbs beyond [Company] jurisdiction', in direct competition with guildsmen who became 'highly vulnerable'.[82] Civic powers of search, and taxation or confiscation, were far-reaching but eventually ignored. The Company sought and failed to regain control by extending its power to the unincorporated towns and 'mere villages' without a guild structure.[83]

Bristol haberdashers left control of early-stage manufacturing to the village feltmakers, a practice borrowed from the clothiers of the wool trade. In doing so, the second monopoly was inadvertently formed. The villagers became a

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[81] 1834 correspondence on Kingston, Surrey, imprisonments (CA).
[82] Walker, *Guild control*, p. 22.
[83] E Charlesworth, 'A Local Example of the Factors Influencing Industrial Location', *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 91, No. 4, April 1938, pp. 340-351.

business within a business, managing their own apprenticeship and quality systems and, through these controls, the rights to entry into the trade. The apprenticeship system protected jobs and imbued a pride in output that would last throughout working life. As the village feltmakers became waged employees and lost contact with the retail trade, their dependence on the city for raw materials, investment, and orders increased. They were at the beck and call of faraway markets with which they had no contact and which they understood less and less. Ramsay and Walker saw Company regulation collapsing 'mainly in the years on either side of 1700 [when] the final emergence of a free industrial economy may be discerned'.[84] In the case of the Bristol hatters, the decline was not a collapse, it was gradual; and it began, not around 1700, but in the 1630s, some forty years after the Company's birth.[85]

Viewed from a twenty-first century vantage point, it may be difficult to grasp that eighteenth and nineteenth century hat manufacturers did not have free control over the appointment of either apprentices or new employees, and therefore the growth of their own business. D J Lee explained that 'all trade unionism places a limitation of managerial freedom in some way, but craft unions have been engaged in an explicit battle over managerial prerogatives in relation to training and manpower'.[86] Looking back over 300 years, Allan

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[84] Ramsay, 'Laisser-Faire', pp. 109-109, Walker, *Guild control*, pp. 9-10.
[85] Sylvia L Thrupp, 'Medieval Gilds Reconsidered', *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 2, No. 2, November 1942, pp. 164-173.
[86] D J Lee, 'Craft Unions and the Force of Tradition: The Case of Apprenticeship', *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, Vol. 17, Issue 1, March 1979, p. 35.

Flanders called this control 'one of the buttresses of [the union's] basic device'.[87] He saw this same tension in the 1960s in the oil refinery at Fawley, Hampshire, and its resolution constituted a 'groundbreaking agreement' between management and the craft unions. Kate Liepmann demonstrated the horizontal and vertical demarcations of contemporary craft trade unionists in her study of the Bristol area. This was developed by Flanders to point to a craft's essence: it was 'paramount as a precondition of obtaining work' and carried a 'great promise of life-long security of employment'.[88]

[87] Allan Flanders, *The Fawley Productivity Agreement, A Case Study of Management and Collective Bargaining* (London, Faber and Faber 1964), p. 215.
[88] Kate Liepmann, *Apprenticeship – An Enquiry into its Adequacy under Modern Conditions* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960), pp. 158-159.

5 Bristol: Home trade, 1600-1855

In 1788, John Aikin wrote extensively about Bristol's manufactures and, rarely among popular travel writers, noted hats as one of the 'considerable articles of domestic and foreign traffic'.[1] By the middle of the nineteenth century, the city newspapers contained a weekly tapestry of stories on the leading hat merchants and their bold advertisements. What paths did the trade follow after the monopolistic scrabblings of Tudor times? There is no great authority on doing day-to-day business in Bristol. 'Scant attention' has been paid to either 'core internal trades or to the commercial linkages fostered with its hinterland'.[2] Secondary literature on specific subjects, like business structure, debt, transport and retailing has a natural preoccupation with London, a tendency to generalise about the regions, and an emphasis on the nineteenth century caused by a lack of easy earlier examples.[3]

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[1] John Aikin, *England Delineated; Or, A Geographical Description Of Every County In England And Wales*, pp. 317-319, cited in Peter T Marcy, 'Eighteenth–century views of Bristol and Bristolians' in P V McGrath, edited, *Bristol in the eighteenth century* (Newton Abbott 1966), pp. 14-15. Also, 'Tho' there are no considerable manufactories in Bristol, yet there are very extensive works carried on ... such as Hat and Soap Manufactories' (BCL, Benjamin Donne, senior, 'Some remarks relating to Bristol', an undated manuscript, estimated between 1795 and 1805), p. 17, cited in F Hewitt, *Population and Urban Growth in East Bristol 1800-1914*, 2 vols. (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Bristol, 1965), Vol. 1, p. 18.

[2] David Hussey, *Coastal and River Trade in Pre-Industrial England, Bristol and Its Region 1680-1730* (New York, Regatta 2000), pp. xi, xv; also, Minchinton, 'Metropolis', p. 70.

[3] For instance, multiple citations in Claire Walsh, *Shopping in early-modern London, c. 1660-1800* (unpublished PhD thesis, European University Institute, 2001). But see Jonathan Barry, 'Popular Culture in Seventeenth-Century Bristol', Chapter 2, in Barry Reay, edited, *Popular Culture in Seventeenth-Century England* (1985, reprint London, Routledge 1988); Madge Dresser and Philip Ollerenshaw, *The Making of Modern Bristol* (Tiverton, Redcliffe, 1996); R I James, 'Bristol Society in the Eighteenth Century', in C M MacInnes and W F Whittard, edited, *Bristol and its Adjoining Counties* (Bristol, British Association for the Advancement of Science 1955), pp. 231-242; Minchinton, 'Metropolis'; and, nationally, Richard Grassby, *The business community of seventeenth-century England* (CUP 1995) and *Kinship and Capitalism, Marriage, Family, and Business in the English-Speaking World, 1580-1740* (CUP 2001).

This chapter searches records generated mainly by the city to draw a picture of cross-century development.[4] The nature of the material often 'precludes a quantitative approach' and relies more on 'accumulating individual examples'.[5] If 'shopkeepers kept accounts, few of those accounts seem to have survived. If shopkeepers were more articulate and kept diaries, few of those too seem to have survived, and when they have, they can be tantalisingly uninformative.'[6] Despite this, many of the businessmen used here as examples could command biographies and 'on many subjects a sentence has to substitute for a book'.[7]

The Company began as a complicated alliance comprising haberdashers and feltmakers, employers and journeymen, and trimmers; and together they dealt with village artisans.[8] There was a degree of distrust in almost every direction. A steady eye was kept on the villagers, and on the citizens who worked with them. Journeymen were accounted in a separate column in the quarterage lists, but there is no evidence that they had a separate organisation. Those who through disinclination, or lack of capital or opportunity, were not to become citizens were restricted in numbers and length of stay when in Bristol.

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[4] The approach and sentiment is endorsed by Grassby, *Kinship and Capitalism*, p. 23.
[5] Richard Grassby, 'English merchant capitalism in the late seventeenth century. The composition of business fortunes', *Past and Present*, No. 46, February 1970, p. 88.
[6] T S Willan, *An Eighteenth Century Shopkeeper: Abraham Dent of Kirkby Stephen* (MUP 1970), p. 8.
[7] Grassby, *Business*, p. xv.
[8] 'Journeyman – a waged worker in the employ of a master. Journeymen were usually then admitted to the guild in some form of associate membership, or to an ancillary membership, or to an ancillary fellowship over which the guild proper exercised some control or at least influence. The usual term in both cases describing such workers was *yeomanry*' (Malcolm Chase, *Early Trade Unionism, Fraternity, skill and the politics of labour* (Aldershot, Ashgate 2000), p. 13. Also, Lipson, *Economic History*, Vol. I, pp. 362-363; Rogers, *Craft Guilds*, pp. 77-83.

Even if sponsored by the family, the prescribed route into business was through apprenticeship.[14] Bristol recorded at least 60,911 apprentices between 1532 and 2008, a number previously uncollated, and of these 1,063 were haberdashers of hats, hatmakers or feltmakers (1.7%).[15] Bristol's records show a 'functioning bureaucracy with well-defined procedures for the collection of municipal income'.[16] Their completeness makes comparisons with apprentice feltmakers in other centres unsatisfactory.[17] Gloucester has

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[14] Bristol embraced the apprenticeship system from Plantagenet times, well before its formal enshrinement in English law through the Statute of Artificers. The city archives show that from the fourteenth century, at least, there was a method in place for managing apprenticeship registration. The city's formal apprenticeship records began in 1532 (Bickley, *Little Red Book of Bristol*), Vol. 1, Items 23-24, pp. 37-38. Also, Hollis, *Calendar*, pp. 4-5; Veale, *Great Red Book*, Vol. IV, pp. 120, 146; Vol. VIII, pp. 49-50.

[15] BRO holdings of apprentice records: 04352, 04353, 04354, 04355, 04356, 04357, 05055. Also printed: Hollis, *Calendar, Part 1*, pp. 1-17 (BRS 1949). Parts 2 & 3 (Vol XXXIII, 1542-1552, edited E Ralph and N M Hardwick, 1980; Vol. XLIII, 1552-1565, edited E Ralph, 1992). *Bristol Apprentice Book 1566-1593*, transcribed Margaret McGregor (Vol. 1 1566-1573; Vol. 2, 1573-1579; Vol. 3, 1579-1586; Vol. 4, 1586-1593; Bristol & Avon Family History Society, 1994). Also, Board of Stamps: Apprenticeship Books, country registers, 1710-1808 (TNA, IR 1); I Fitzroy Jones, *Abstract of the Apprentice Books of the City of Bristol, 1600-1630* (BRO, 2102, 1936). The current register is held at the Mayor's Office. Appendix 17: *Apprentice enrolments: Methodology & reservations.*

[16] Anne Yarbrough, 'Geographical and Social Origins of Bristol Apprentices, 1542-1565', *TBGAS*, Vol. 98, 1980, p. 120.

[17] Southampton had minimal hatting representation among its uneven record keeping. Jurors still complained in 1604 that records were not kept by the town clerk and 'apprentices shall not enjoye there freedome' (Arthur J Willis, compiler, A L Merson, editor and introduction, *A Calendar of Southampton Apprenticeship Registers, 1609-1740*, Vol. X11, Southampton University Press 1968), pp. xii-xiii. Southampton differentiated its pauper apprentices through its own Poor Child Register (Southampton Record Office, SC 9/2-13). There are no direct apprentice records in Norwich, the city's compilation being a reconstruction from its burgess lists (Conversation 13/3/2009, Norfolk Record Office Archivist Tom Townsend); Winifred M Rising and Percy Millican, *An index of indentures of Norwich apprentices enrolled with the Norwich Assembly, Henry VII-George II*, Vol. XXIX, Norfolk Record Society 1959). London's feltmaker apprentices are transcribed from the city company's early Court Minute Books with gaps between 1683-1691 and 1708-1835, partly supplemented by the company's Orphans' Tax Books. London registered 4,651 feltmaker apprentices between 1676 and 1800 although the records include a number of 'sing[e]ing boys', who were used to burn off excess fur or wool from the felt hoods with lit tapers (Cliff Webb, *London Livery Company Apprenticeship Registers, Vol. 37 of 48, Feltmakers' Company, 1676-1682, 1692-1800*, abstracted and indexed, London, Society of Genealogists Enterprises Limited 2002, from LGL, MS 1570 and 1573).

good records; apprentices from 1595-1835 are transcribed.[18] The city was a small hat centre with 169 feltmaking apprentices, 37% of the Bristol city total for the same period, but without the village support. The total of feltmaker apprentices registered in Bristol, Gloucester, and the Gloucestershire villages, is over 40% of the London enrolments.[19]

Once in business for themselves, Bristol masters prepared for a life time's trade and, in their set up days, immediately offered apprenticeships. Between 1546 and 1849, 230 masters managed 633 apprentices, averaging a new apprentice every 8.4 years. Seventy-five percent of masters took more than two apprentices, forty-five percent took more than four. Few masters had more than one apprentice at the same time; no example was found of more than two concurrent apprenticeships. The number of apprentices per master ranged from one to eleven, with a mean of 2.75.[20] This seems prudent spacing and shows how deeply the apprentice system with its legislated limitation to two apprentices was bound into the city's trade.

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[18] Admission by apprenticeship recorded from 1454: Gloucester Borough Records, F 4/1, C 9/6; from *Medieval Gloucester: The regulation of trade, A History of the County of Gloucester*, Vol. 4: The City of Gloucester (Victoria County History, 1988), p. 57. Jill Barlow, edited, Gloucester Record Series, *A Calendar of the Registers of Apprentices of the City of Gloucester 1595-1700*, Vol. 14, *1701-1834*, Vol. 25 (*TBGAS* 2001, 2011), pp. 14/xi-xxxii; second volume preview, courtesy of Barlow.
[19] Appendix 18: *Feltmaker Apprentice Enrolments, 1541-1855.*
[20] Appendix 19: *Bristol masters and numbers of their apprentices.*

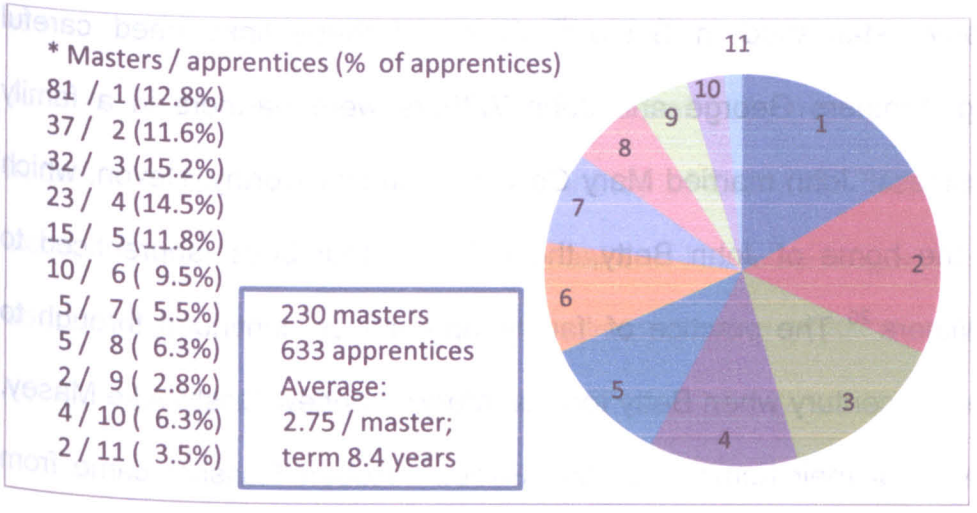

Figure 31: Numbers of feltmaker apprentices to each Bristol master, 1546-1849.[21]

Parents or a guardian of a hopeful apprentice looked first for a match either through family or by an arrangement with fellow tradesmen. Anne Yarbrough found that 'where master and the apprentice's family were bound by some ties the chances for successful completion of the apprenticeship were increased'.[22] Over 12% of boys were apprenticed to feltmakers of the same surname of whom fifty-two at least (7%) were their fathers.[23] Ninety-three orphans (11%) were apprenticed, about one every three years, the majority coming from families that were associated with the trade in or close to the city. Peter Clark emphasised the importance of personal connections and kinship because the 'urban immigrant was expected to look after the education as well as the employment of his rural kinsman coming to town'.[24] A frequent introduction involved country cousins and contact with a master feltmaker who

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[21] The percentages are calculated by multiplying masters by apprentices as a portion of the total of 633 apprentices, rounded to one decimal place.
[22] Yarbrough, 'Origins', p. 115.
[23] Calculated from 1,054 hatters, feltmakers and haberdashers apprenticed from 1537-1840.
[24] Peter Clark, 'The Migrant in Kentish Towns, 1580-1640' in Peter Clark and Paul Slack, edited, *Crisis and Order in English Towns 1500-1700, Essays in urban history* (London, Routledge and Keegan Paul 1972), p. 136.

was already established in Bristol.[25] Some of these links need careful unravelling: brothers George and John Withers were partners in a family hatting business. John married Mary Cory, born in Holsworthy, Devon, which was also the home of John Betty, the father of four boys, apprenticed to George Withers.[26] The practice of 'family' apprentices continued through to the nineteenth century when Betty took on Mary's nephew Gostwycke Masey, the boy living at their home in Wilson Street.[27] Robert Rossiter came from Doulting, Somerset. When he became a London master, backed by a Bristol consortium, he secured a stream of apprentices selected from near his home for his workshops in Pudding Lane.[28]

After introduction, the master feltmaker specified his conditions and received requests.[29] The arrangement could include responsibility for clothes, lodging, food and washing; the term if longer than seven years; premiums for sought after posts; bonds against failure to complete; end of term payments in cash or kind; and an agreement to a first year of employment at a fixed rate, known as a covenanted year.[30] Bonds were unusual and were more likely made at the beginning of the trade to provide the master with financial reimbursement

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[25] See Tim Leunig, Chris Minns and Patrick Wallis, 'Networks in the Premodern Economy: the Market for London Apprenticeships, 1600-1749', *Centre for Economic Performance Discussion Paper*, No. 956, November 2009.
[26] Marriage 29/6/1833, St Paul (B&AFHS, 3o/94/282). 1851 Census.
[27] 1851 Census.
[28] Twenty-one apprentices are listed for Robert from 1720-1757, six from Somerset, and including Robert's own son James 6/11/1738 (Webb, *London Index*). Premises: London trade directories: *Intelligencer*, 1738; *Complete Guide*, 1740, first edition; *Kent's*, 1753.
[29] Appendix 20: *Vow of apprentice feltmakers, 1700.*
[30] The practice of the covenant year, noted primarily in Bristol, has been attributed to a desire by the guilds to restrict or delay the entry of new masters into their trade (Dunlop, *Apprenticeship*), p. 125.

in the event of a runaway or lazy boy. But there were other uses. In 1563, John Davis left his master and gave a 'bond of £20 never to follow the [hat] trade'. Only one feltmaker sought assurance of £40 while there were seven examples among the wealthier haberdashers. Nicholas Moger, for example, bound Joseph Cooke of *Lacock* for his son for £100 in 1622. The practice was not recorded after 1625.

A premium might change hands although this was unusual for feltmakers, especially in the seventeenth century, and was less prevalent in Bristol than in London. Numbers of premiums declared for tax, as opposed to charitable charges, remained low in the eighteenth century, but a few haberdashers of hats were able to demand £100 and, in 1798, hat manufacturer Thomas Deering, received £160.[31]

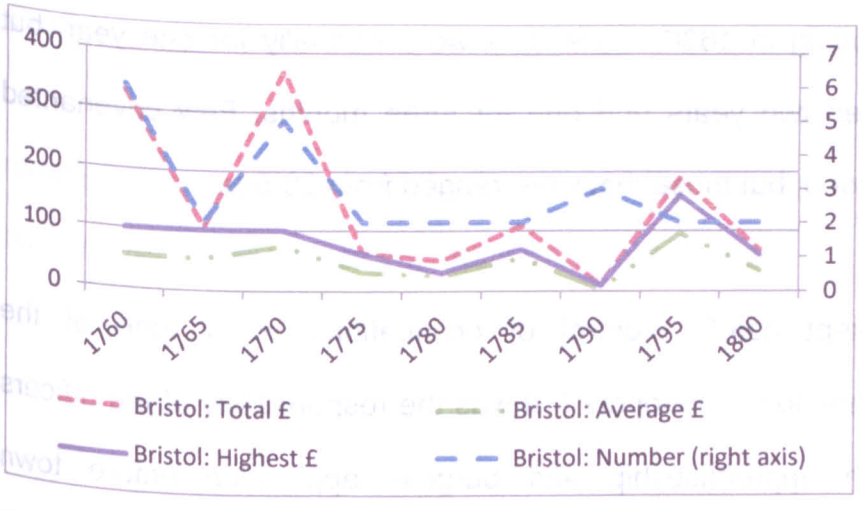

Figure 32: Bristol apprenticeship premiums in the hat trade in five-year periods until the early 1800s when the premium stamp tax was discontinued.[32]

[31] TNA, IR 1/69. Among the thirty-five advertisements in Bristol for apprentices 1782-1784 and 1787-1789, 20% asked for a premium, two of which were to be 'handsome' and one 'small' (*FFBJ*). In the eighteenth century, premiums to £100 and beyond, especially for entry into retail, were common.

[32] Premiums were a purely private affair between father and master until legislation in 1709 when the amount of any premium was required to be mentioned in indentures to enable

The sixteenth to eighteenth century Bristol feltmaker records show several agreements over small payments to be made to the apprentice by the master at the end of a successful term to cover admission to the Company and freedom fines. There were few commitments to provide inexpensive work tools, an arrangement often common in other trades. The main specialist item, the feltmaker's bow, was prepared as a life-time tool by the apprentices as part of their training. With a bow, a supply of wool, and a fire, bason and plank of wood, the new journeyman hood maker could set up in his home. In 1546, Francis Wudshawe from Tamworth was promised 'four stokes a basin & a walkynpyn' by his master, Bristol hatmaker Henry Mills. The next year, Mills promised that Thomas Crocun from Ilminster would receive 'all the tools of the trade' on completion. Thirty-six apprentices in hat or cap businesses were covenanted from 1549 for additional service after apprenticeship; the last agreement concluding in 1636. Covenants were normally for one year, but four of them lasted two years and one for three months. Few covenanted wages were recorded, but those that were ranged from 20-50s.

The Company kept careful control of occupational entry, one of the cornerstones of their local monopoly.[33] It was the responsibility of the officers to approve each apprenticeship and burgess application before town

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taxation under The Stamp Act, 8 Anne, c. 5. The rates were 6d on each indenture plus 6d in the pound on each premium rising to 1s in the pound for premiums over £50. Apprenticeships taken out at common or public charge, or by charity, were not taxed. Some evasion must be expected. Payment of the tax was allowed up to eight years after the start of an indenture (TNA, IR 1, thirty-two volumes of county records; taxation in London recorded separately).

[33] Dunlop, *Apprenticeship*, pp. 84-87.

registration.[34] The Company worked closely with the municipality, many of whom were guild members. Both sides collected money for the privilege of registration, the amount remaining remarkably constant; for instance, the Company charged 3s 4d for apprentice enrolment in the sixteenth century, with the apprentice charged 2d and the same again for each turnover, while the town charged 4s 6d; the same amounts as 150 years later.[35]

Eight percent of feltmaker and haberdasher apprentices were 'turned over' from one master to another usually following ill-health, death, or early retirement. Sometimes the master ran off, the apprentice was sold on (a dubious practice) or there was a damaging break-down in relationship. One turnover for an apprentice was therefore not unusual, twice was not remarkable. Two apprentices with six masters have been found: one suffered a run of bad luck; the other, a tearaway from Frampton Cotterell, was brought back twice from London. Both the Company and the city levied a fine for reassignment; a missed notification could affect a right to freedom, and so turnover recording was an important part of the process.

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[34] This separate record of apprenticeships in Bristol trade books can be used to cross check the sequence of individual cases.
[35] Compare *Register of Apprentices* and *Actions and Apprentices* (BRO, 04352, 04356); *Minute Books of the Company*. Also *Mayor's Audit Book 1710-11* (BRO, F/Au/1/180).

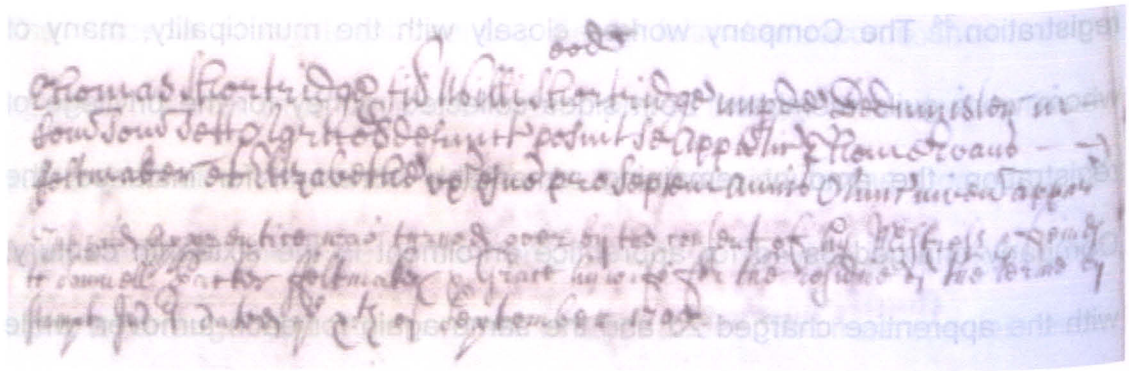

Figure 33: The apprenticeship in 1703 of Thomas Shortridge of Bedminster, a future burgess, to Thomas Evans, feltmaker, and Elizabeth, with below the turnover 'by the consent of his mistress and friends' to Samuel and Grace Parker in 1709.[36]

These transactions show that motives to support the feltmaker apprenticeship system were not consistent across all those with an interest.[37] The motives fall naturally into five categories: passing on skills; the supply and control of a sufficient and cheap workforce; security from individual want and civic disorder; higher status; and revenue, whether from business growth, premiums, various registration fees, bonds or direct taxation.[38] The disparity can readily be seen with increasing demands for control and taxation as the organisational ladder is climbed. Perhaps not surprisingly, it is the apprentice who is most out of step with the aspirations of the broader community.

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[36] BRO, 04353/3.

[37] Objectives of these participants are gathered here from legislation, Bristol ordinances and registers, Company minute book, newspaper reports and the informed deductions of the indexers and historians of the trade: Barlow, Ben-Amos, Day, Davies, Dunlop, Hollis, Merson, and Yarbrough. The records for Bristol's own pauper apprentices were lost in bombing in 1943.

[38] Yarbrough, 'Origins', p. 114, noted that apprentices in a five-trade study in 1542-65 produced very little leadership, but provided 'a strong element of stability' in the town.

Objective	Guardian	Apprentice	Master	Guild	City	Government	Consumer
Skills	Cheap training	Skill acquisition	Cheap labour	Cheap training		Cheap training	Steady price
			Control	Quality work	Quality work	Quality work	Quality work
				Control	Continuity	Continuity	
Workforce			Labour pool	Control	Control	Control	
Security	For child	From want	Work cover	Trade order	Civic order	Civic order	Sufficient supply
	Care in old age	Joining 'club'	Bond	Trade secrets	One trade voice	One trade voice	
Opportunity	For family	Right to work	Business growth	Guild status	Town growth	Skilled economy	
		Right to trade					
Revenue	Wealth transfer	Capital accumulation	Profit	Apprentice fines	Apprentice fines	Premium tax	
			Premium	Quarterage	Burgess fines	Tax payers	
				Admission fines			

Table 2: Objectives of the participants in the Bristol feltmaker apprenticeship system.

As apprentices became masters and took their own apprentices, and so on, a chain of contacts developed that in one case stretched through four centuries. A review, where possible, of new apprentices taken by a master hatter, or of his choice of business partner, shows that, in addition to real kinship, many working relationships were between individuals already known to each other. This choice was often directed by the master apprentice chain. These chains were broken from time to time by death or by masters giving up the trade. However, six strong chains are evident in Bristol and show, by the later eighteenth century, the close knit nature of the hatting community. This 'togetherness' also suggests that, in this craft industry, the same words of rote

were repeated to trainees over the centuries; perhaps this explains how masters were able to examine a felt hat and to know its maker.[39]

The most extensive chain began with Nicholas Stacy in 1591, a burgess by redemption and a founder of the Company. His apprentice 'descendants' can be tracked over eight generations ending with Oliver Ransford in the nineteenth century. The main trail, by date of freedom, includes Stacy, John Slande 1629, William Hollister 1636, Arthur Hooper 1653, Peter Lovell 1698, Moses Brain 1734 (and temporarily his widow, Mary), Edward Ransford 1758, and Oliver Ransford 1826. There were over fifty 'related' apprentices in this chain. A chain from David Thomas to George Davis 1595, Henry Merrick 1614, Thomas Fry 1647, Samuel Packer 1704, James Harding 1716, James Harding 1746, and William Hitchens 1766, produced over forty 'relatives'.

Much of the Company's effort in the first years was spent in protecting members' rights by restricting 'foreigners' and by managing the processes of apprenticeship and admission and its possible path to citizenship. There seems to have been little time found for a formal set of administrative procedures.[40] This may be the reason why consideration was given to the appointment for life of Richard Little as a 'clerk of Hall' in 1604.[41] His pay was 2s 8d a year with an additional 2d for every apprentice and 4d for 'every man

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[39] *HG*, 1/6/1889.
[40] Appendix 21: *Bristol feltmakers and haberdashers, 1595-1865.*
[41] The entry is crossed through although this may have been done at a later date (BRO, 8/10/1604, 08156/1), p. 340.

that is made free' ... 'as long as he useth himself in good behaviour and be able to serve at the masters' commands at all time'.

The minute book contains records of 652 members, including 571 men of which 192 (37%) became burgesses, more than the city trade average.[42] If becoming a burgess was the measure of success, then some 63% of feltmaker apprenticeships could be said to have failed.[43] In the decade from 1691, the average 'successful' feltmaker freedoms reached 88%, settling at over 45% during the eighteenth century.[44] This higher than normal citizenship is because as the number of 'working' apprentices declined after 1700 so the proportion of sons of established haberdashers and hat manufacturers among apprentices rose. These were not apprentices trained for a life at the bow and bason, but heirs to substantial businesses. Almost 70% of all eighteenth century freedoms were from within the trade and, of those, at least 56% were received by individuals related closely to owners of established firms.[45]

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[42] Appendix 22: *Burgess feltmakers, 1558-1868.*

[43] Webbs, *Industrial Democracy*, p. 481. Bert De Munck, Steven L Kaplan and Hugo Soly, *Learning on the Shop Floor, Historical Perspectives on Apprenticeship* (New York, Berghahn 2007), p. 212, cited in Minns and Wallis, 'Rules and Reality', p. 3. Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos, 'Failure to become freemen: urban apprentices in early modern England', *Social History*, Vol. 16, No. 2, May 1991, pp. 155-156, and Minns and Wallis, 'Rules and Reality'. Appendix 23: *'Failed' feltmaker apprentices.*

[44] BRO, 04358, 04359/1-21.

[45] Based on a comparison between the hatting burgess records and the Company minute books.

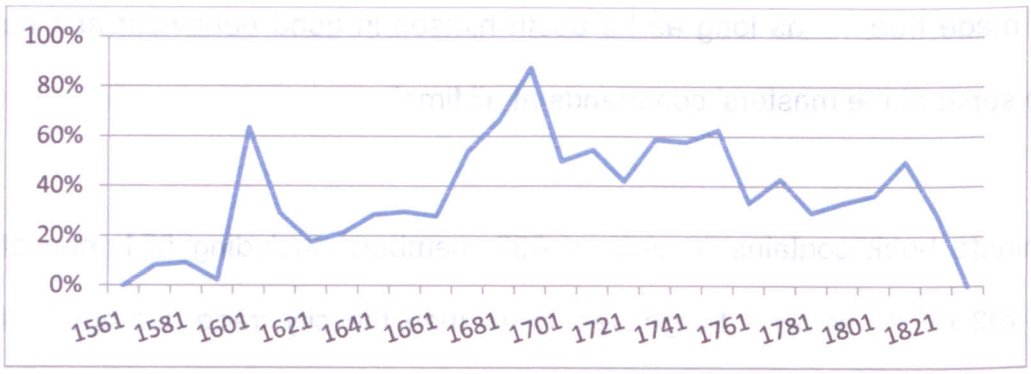

Figure 34: The percentage of Bristol apprentices in the hatting trade who became burgesses, 1561-1834.[46]

Women were not allowed to join the Company or to take apprentices. However, if a feltmaker died, the widow was able to take her husband's place at work and in the Company and to pay quarterage and eighty-one did this. On sixteen occasions between 1615 and 1778, the widow also assumed sole responsibility for the apprentices.

As membership steadied, the number of rules increased. The reliance on fines and forfeits is not unusual in a company structure, but with the feltmakers it speaks of desperation to force conformity. There were twenty-six reasons for being fined in the early articles and forty-four possible fines, depending on the perpetrator. The ordinances of 1611, with their fine increases in 1668, worsened matters with thirty-nine 'crimes' and seventy-six fines. The Company was the court of first resort for the large number of what were essentially procedural or monopolistic offences. Where there was dispute or a possible serious sanction, like suspension or disenfranchisement, cases were

[46] Appendix 24: *Process: Apprentice feltmaker to burgess, c. 1710.*

taken before the mayor and alderman and, later, in the case of intransigence, the debtors' court.

Meetings were sometimes rowdy affairs and weapons were banned from Hall 'whereby to disturb the quiet of the Company (as heretofore it hath been done)'.[47] There was one recorded case of violence in 1621 when Robert Pike admitted hitting William Vasey, apprentice to John Floyd, and paid Floyd twenty shillings. Floyd was 'contented to receive [this] in full satisfaction' and acquitted Pike of the offence.[48] There were cases of 'self-abuse', swearing, and difficulties when the Company took a 'distress of the goods' for non-payment of fines.[49] The method 'hath and doth often occasion affrays and other mischiefs tending to the breach of the peace' and 'mischiefs and ill conveniences' often followed. A new, safer process was for the Company to 'enter in its own name an action of debt' for trial at the Guildhall Court and to 'recover ordinary costs for prosecution as in other cases is commonly used'. In 1644, nineteen members gave a combined thirty shillings, a pike and a sword 'to the advanceinge of arms for our haule'.[50] This may be the 'only mention of any [Bristol] gild appearing to take an active part in preparation for military operations'.[51]

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[47] The forfeit was 6s 8d (Article 25).
[48] 8/5/1621 (BRO, 08156/1).
[49] BRO, 04369/1. Appendix 21. *Bristol feltmakers and haberdashers, 1595-1865.*
[50] 1644 (BRO, 08156/1), p. 257. Appendix 25: *Hall contribution to preparations for war, 1644.*
[51] Rogers, *Craft Gilds*, p. 58.

Rituals and regalia were not mentioned, but entertaining was frequently discussed. Masters complained of the cost of their obligatory free dinner for all members during second and further terms of office. Confident of increasing membership (but unknowingly already at the acme) 'as much as our Company are grown more in numbers and increased very much', they awarded themselves twenty shillings for each subsequent dinner.[52] Young admissions also complained about the additional costs of becoming free, but the masters were less understanding. While 'it hath been ever an ancient custom that every young man is to make a breakfast for the Company and now forasmuch as divers of our company doth refuse ... and have not done it', the masters decided that the upstarts 'shall not come to none of the masters' dinner upon the swearing day or at any quarter day neither are any of those to come to any meeting of drinking or feasting with the Company'.[53] Talk of an 'ancient custom' in 1622 in a Company founded less than thirty years before may not have been a winning argument and could have prompted a small loosening of the ties of burgeoning tradition. By 1741, masters decided that the master's dinner could be traded for a £4 contribution.[54]

The feltmaker craftsman lived above his work and provided day-to-day retailing of hats from his premises. The first shops in Tudor times were 'more open rooms on the ground floors, with wide windows closed with shutters ...

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[52] 12/10/1621 (BRO, 08156/1), pp. 332-333.
[53] 1/4/1622 (BRO, 08156/1), p. 323.
[54] 12/10/1741 (BRO, 08156/2), p. 565.

these rooms being enlarged by projecting and portable stalls'.[55] John Latimer described the streets of old Bristol as 'laid out at a period when the inland traffic of the country was exclusively carried on by means of pack horses'.[56] Celia Fiennes in 1697 found the buildings 'pretty high most of timber work, the streets are narrow and something darkish, because the rooms on the upper storys are more jutting out'.[57] Copied from London Bridge, the old bridge with its thirty houses and shops was restricted and dangerous.[58]

Commerce with the hatting villages took place on historic routes, developed for agriculture and local travel. These roads were adequate for the weekly distribution of wool and secure collection of felt hoods which could be accommodated alongside South Gloucestershire coal or potatoes, peas and beans. At the city gates, all goods, including the hoods, were transferred to sledges and dragged through a 'strange mixture of seamen, women, children, loaded Horses, Asses' that 'choked the quays, backs and famously narrow streets'.[59] The heavy sledges rubbed continually against the pavement and 'rendered it smooth, and in frosty weather slippery and dangerous'.[60] Other areas of food supply became established as markets for hats finished in

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[55] Ray B Westerfield, *Middlemen in English Business, particularly between 1660-1760* (Yale University Press 1915, reprint Newton Abbot, David and Charles 1968), p. 341.
[56] J Latimer, *The Annals of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century* (Private 1893), p. 3.
[57] Christopher Morris, edited, *The Journeys of Celia Fiennes* (1697, London, Cresset 1947).
[58] The second Bristol Bridge was not opened to foot passengers until 1768 and for general traffic the next year (Marcy, 'Roads'), p. 153. There were forty-one shops on the northern half of London Bridge in 1633 including seven haberdashers of small wares and five haberdashers of hats (Richard Thompson, *Chronicles of Old London Bridge*, 1839), p. 294, cited in Davis, *Shopping*, p. 111.
[59] Marcy, 'Views', p. 20. Hussey, *Coastal*, p. xiii.
[60] Marcy, 'Roads', p. 150, citing R J Sullivan, *Observations Made During A Tour* (London 1780), p. 91; also Thomas Fuller, *The Worthies of England* (1662), in Bettey, *Observed*, p. 51.

Bristol: barley from west Wales; oats from Cardigan and Carmarthen; milk, eggs, poultry from the dairy farms of Somerset, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire; and vegetables from the vale of Glamorgan. Drover trails were well established bringing Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire black cattle and Cardigan pigs for fattening in South Gloucestershire before market.[61]

From 1600, shops 'were extending themselves in number, size and importance ... especially in the larger cities and towns' and had reached many villages.[62] Gregory King's 'informed guess' was of 40,000 'shopkeepers and tradesmen' nationally in the 1690s.[63] About half of a household's annual income was spent on food and about a quarter on clothing, including over three million felt hats.[64] King suggested that by 1688 nearly ten shillings per head of population was spent on apparel, including 'nearly 4,910,000 hats and caps of all sorts' [almost one per person].[65]

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[61] Minchinton, 'Metropolis', pp. 73-76; also W E Minchinton, 'Agriculture in Gloucestershire during the Napoleonic Wars', *TBGAS*, Vol. LXVIII, 1949, pp. 165-183. William Albert, *The Turnpike Road System in England: 1663-1840* (CUP, 1972), pp. 14-21. Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *English Local Government: The Story of the King's Highway* (London 1913), pp. 14-61, 114-116.

[62] Westerfield, *Middlemen*, p. 341. Ronald M Berger, 'The Development of Retail Trade in Provincial England, c. 1550-1700', *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 40, No. 1, 'The Tasks of Economic History', March 1980, p. 125.

[63] Joan Thirsk and J P Cooper, edited, *Seventeenth-Century Economic Documents* (Oxford, Clarendon Press 1972), p. 780, cited in Nancy Cox and Karin Dannehl, *Perceptions of Retailing in Early Modern England* (Aldershot, Ashgate 2007), p. 47, taken from Gregory King, 'Natural and Political Observations and Conclusions upon the State and Condition of England', *Two Tracts by Gregory King*, edited George E Barnett (Baltimore, Hopkins 1936).

[64] Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities*, p. 241.

[65] Thirsk, *Policy*, p. 176, Also Nancy Cox, *The Complete Tradesman: A Study of Retailing, 1550-1820* (Aldershot, Ashgate 2000), pp. 3-4. J A Chartres, *Internal Trade in England, 1500-1700* (London, Macmillan 1977), pp. 50-52. P Mathias, *The Transformation of England* (London 1979), pp. 186-187.

Of the thirty-six men in the hat trade in Bristol in the seventeenth century who left either a will, or probate assessment, or both, twenty-eight can be identified by parish with three of these prominent: St Mary Redcliffe, thirteen; St Thomas, five; and SS Philip and Jacob, five; with no other parish having more than one hat business.[66] A minimum of two appraisers was required to establish an inventory: a creditor and, for specialised goods like felt hats, 'a fellow craftsman or tradesman was usually called in to assist'.[67] Haberdashers and feltmakers from the Company were used to appraise the goods of deceased fellow tradesmen in Bristol. The repetition of these names confirms that in the seventeenth century, at least, the Company quarterage lists give a near complete view of the leaders of the city trade.

The value of the goods in all of these thirty-six records was £5,706 10s 9d, an average of about £158. The figure is distorted by the wealth of five haberdashers of hats (Thomas Dawes £2,050, Richard Shutter £506, Richard Hort c. £500, Samuel Hort c. £420, and Thomas Lloyd £495) and one feltmaker (Robert Jones, £569); all except Lloyd were members of the Company. If these exceptional amounts are excluded, the average falls to just under £39.

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[66] Appendix 15: *Hatter wills, probates and sources, 1588-1889*; 193 records. Also S Lang and M McGregor, *Tudor Wills Proved in Bristol 1546-1603* (BRS, Vol. 44, 1993); Georges, *Guide*; E and S George, edited, *Bristol Probate Inventories*, Part 1 1542-1650, Part 2 1657-1689, Part 3 1690-1804 (BRS, Vol. 54, 2002; Vol. 57, 2005; Vol. 60, 2008).

[67] Probates included the deceased's personal possessions, and moveable goods, including those used in his trade, but no goodwill from the business or any freehold property. Inventories are 'not a direct measure of a person's wealth', but appraised only at the second-hand value they would be expected to fetch if the executors were forced to sell them (Georges, *Guide*), pp. xii, xxi.

The appraisers worked from room to room. The haberdashers and feltmakers occupied properties of between four and eight apartments, with half of them given over to work. Little stock was carried, although it must be remembered that these men had recently died and production may not have been brisk. Nicholas Stacy, feltmaker, 1624, and John Trueman, hatter, 1635, had similar basic equipment: *plankes*, *bassones*, *blockes* and, showing that they were both makers, *bowes*, *hurdles* and *bowe strings*. Trueman's *lofte* contained over £40 of *woull*, while Stacy's *worke howse* contained only a small amount; Trueman manufactured for himself, while Stacy either worked for others or had let his materials decline. The remaining probate inventories show that in the seventeenth century retail hat shops were spread around the city, with stock reflecting the pockets of local customers. Those who made small fortunes were limited and much more likely to be haberdashers who, like the clothiers of the wool trade, organised the whole or part of the process from feltmaking through to retail outlet.

The alternative in Bristol to the craft shop was always the city's fairs. In 1529 Redcliffe, a suburb of Bristol, obtained the grant of a fair, but it proved 'prejudicial and harmful' to the interests of the citizens. Bristol cappers found that purchasers now stayed away from the city and resorted instead to the new fair to buy from 'cappers of London and other foreign cappers of this realm' leading to an impassioned petition two years later.[68]

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[68] *Select Pleas in the Star Chamber*, Vol ii, 252,261 seq., cited in Lipson, *Economic History*, Vol. 1, p. 236. Petition, 11/2/1531 (HCL).

Bristol held two great fairs and six smaller ones, which together 'dominated the trading year' for cattle, grain and many manufactured goods.[69] The St Paul's, or winter fair, was held in and about Temple Street on the south side of Bristol Bridge, and the St James's fair, in the 'spacious churchyard and in some adjacent streets'.[70] At the latter, local people and those from South Wales, were called on to discharge their 'shop debts' to itinerant and city traders.[71] The St James's fair provided for the general settlement of obligations where traders 'paid but once in twelve months'.[72] Hatters were regular attendees at these fairs until the mid-eighteenth century. A hat shop at St James was rented for 6s 8d in 1572 alongside fifteen similarly priced standings for a total of £5 16s 4d.[73] In 1621 at St Paul's Fair among standings for a book binder and an acorn seller were likely two members of the Company: two of the shops at two shillings each were reserved for Mr Paine,

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[69] The 'most considerable' competition to Bristol was at Gloucester, Cirencester and Tewkesbury 'which are well frequented and abundantly supplied with corn, meat, poultry, and other necessities of life' (Rudge, *General View*), pp. 338-340. Rudge also lists twenty-five county fairs from market towns, of which close to hatter villages are Dursley, Marshfield, Painswick, Sodbury, Tetbury, Thornbury, Wickwar, and Wootton-under-Edge.

[70] 'Charter of Charles II in 1684 made grant of eight fairs to Bristol, three woollen fairs in King Street which was 'terminated by the Merchants Hall', totalling five days, in April, June and at Michaelmas ... and five fairs for the buying and selling of horses: 25/1, Temple Street; 25-26 March, Redcliffe Hill; 25-26 May, Broadmead, St James; 25-27/9, Temple Street; and 25-27 November, Redcliffe Hill, and it was clear that this was a confirmation of existing fairs' (The Rev N H Hulbert, 'Material Collected for a Survey of the Bristol Fairs', *A Historical Survey of the Somerset and Bristol Fairs*, unpublished MA thesis, University of Bristol, 1935), p. 2. On the protests of traders in 1731, St Paul's and St James's dates were changed to 1/3 and 1/9 and expanded by charter from two days to nine, but practically for two weeks. Also, *Mathews' 1793-4 Bristol Directory* (Archive cd books 2002).

[71] A H John, *Industrial Development of South Wales 1750-1850* (Cardiff, University of Wales Press 1950), pp. 10-14.

[72] Minchinton, 'Metropolis', p. 80. Jonathan Antony Sturges Harlow, *The life and times of Thomas Speed* (unpublished PhD thesis, University of the West of England, 2009). Holinshed in 1576 mentions 'Bristow fair' (probably St James) as one of those 'not inferior to the greatest marts in Europe', linking it with Stourbridge, Bartholomew and Lynn (Raphael Holinshed, *Chronicles of England Scotland and Ireland*, Vol. 1, 1576), p. 339.

[73] Westerfield, *Middlemen*, p. 364; Hulbert, 'Fairs', p. 5.

and Richard Twyson.[74] The fair shops developed from standings that became roofed. The shops were open in the lower part and protected by a shutter or glass, closed at night; the upper part was later provided with glass windows.[75]

Figure 35: A later (c. 1740), but appropriate, print of a tinware dealer's fair stall.[76]

Bristol remained substantially medieval at the start of the eighteenth century, an 'overcrowded tangle of narrow lanes and courts and alleys'. About 20,000 people lived in 4,000 houses in the architectural style of 1500 which was still followed by builders. Craftsmen's houses were for trade first and dwelling afterwards, and 'even the richest merchants were content to live over their business premises in homes replete with every Tudor inconvenience'.[77] In 1700, these rooms faced the

> malodorous refuse of private households, of the numerous street stalls and markets for food and animals, the slaughter-houses, and the awful by-products of such places as tanneries and dye-works – all of which was thrown out into the central gutter – while the traffic struggled to force its way through the wretched lanes ... To this bedlam must be added the bawling of street hawkers, of the market

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[74] Hulbert, 'Fairs', pp. 12-13.
[75] Westerfield, *Middlemen*, p. 342.
[76] Anonymous, after a painting by Christoph Kilian (V&A, 24444, D/F/2/D).
[77] James, 'Bristol Society', pp. 231-232. Population: Kenneth Morgan, 'The Economic Development of Bristol', in Dresser and Ollerenshaw, *Making*, p. 49.

people at the stalls, apprentices and shopmen 'barking' at their doors for custom.[78]

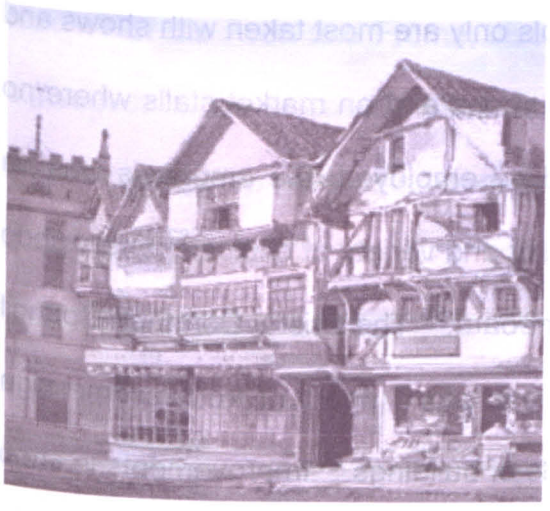

Figure 36: Medieval even to the nineteenth century: William Edwards & Co, hat manufacturers and dealers, corner of Mary-le-port Street, with felt hats hanging outside above the mullioned windows, c. 1825.[79]

By 1720, limited 'foreign' hat competition was allowed. A feltmaker and a comber from London shared a standing for twenty-one years next to the cross in Temple Street at St Paul's Fair for a payment of £3 each year.[80] The Company's minute book shows possible joint retailing with payments between 1s and 29s 6d twice a year from 1728-1740 as charges against 'shutting up shops', 'shutting shops at the fair', or just 'shops'.[81]

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[78] James, 'Bristol Society', p. 232.

[79] Hugh O'Neill, watercolour, Swan Inn, Bristol, c. 1825 (Bristol Museums, Galleries and Archives, ©, M2803). *Pigot Trade Directory*, 1830. Also, from the other end of the street, watercolour by J L S Rowbotham, 1826 (Sheena Stoddard, *Bristol before the Camera: The City in 1820–30*, Bristol, Redcliffe, 2001), p. 33.

[80] Counterpart articles of agreement between the churchwardens of the parish of Temple with Peter Cooper, parish of Horsley Downe, St Olave's, Surrey, feltmaker, and John Greenwood of The Strand, Middlesex, combmaker, 3/2/1720 (BRO, P.Tem/Ae/14, also 00149(1)). Also cited in Carl B Estabrook, *Urbane and rustic England, Cultural ties and social spheres in the provinces 1660-1780* (MUP, 1998), p. 80.

[81] BRO, 08156/1&2.

After considering the painting and gilding, fine shelves, shutters, boxes, glass-doors, sashes and the like, Defoe inferred in 1727 that 'this age must have more fools than the last: for certainly fools only are most taken with shows and outside'.[82] In the basic wooden lock-up shops and on market stalls where no elaborate fittings and furnishings could be employed, the emphasis was on the open display of goods and on quantity and variety of choice.[83] Every shop had its conspicuous and significant signboard.[84] The Bristol Common Council acquired an act in 1766 which forced the taking down of troublesome sign boards and placing them flat on the walls of buildings.[85] Improvements in shop design were largely unknown outside of large towns before 1850.

Since the seventeenth-century Bristol traded overland with 'all the principal countries and towns from Southampton in the south, even to the banks of the Trent'.[86] However, the 'core hinterland remained fundamentally coastal and riparian ... inextricably linked to water transport, and the distinct cost advantages it conferred on the movement of goods'.[87] T S Willan suggested

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[82] Defoe, *The Complete English Tradesman* (1745, reprint Tutis Digital 2008), p. 189.
[83] Walsh, 'Shop Design', p. 164.
[84] Westerfield, *Middlemen*, p. 344.
[85] Other improvements included the banning of new houses which hung over the street; cleaning and paving streets; two new streets, Union and Clare, forty and thirty feet wide; and the removal of Lawford's Gate to relieve congestion (6 George III, c. 34). Peter T Marcy, 'Bristol's roads and communications on the eve of the industrial revolution, 1740-1780', *TBGAS*, Vol. LXXXVII, 1969, p. 151.
[86] Defoe, *Tour*, p. 362; repeated in Benjamin Martin, *The Natural History of England* (London 1759), pp. 74-75. Also Defoe, *Tradesman*, p. xi; William Barrett, *The History and Antiquities of the City of Bristol* (1789, reprint Alan Sutton 1982), pp. 167-169, 183-185; Marcy, 'Roads', pp. 149-172.
[87] T S Willan, *River Navigation in England, 1600-1750* (London, Frank Cass 1964), pp. 3-5; Willan, *The English Coasting Trade, 1600-1750* (Reprint, MUP 1967), pp. xiv-xvi and reassessed in J A Chartres, 'Road Carrying in England in the Seventeenth Century: Myth and Reality', *The Economic History Review*, New Series, Vol. 30, No. 1, February 1977, pp. 73-94, and in *Internal Trade in England, 1500-1700*, Economic History Society (Basingstoke,

that the Severn and its tributaries 'appear to have carried on their surface almost the entire trade of the district through which they flowed'.[88] The upper reaches of the Avon and Frome, close to the feltmaker villages, were of little consequence as arteries of communication with Bristol's hinterland. The Avon's navigation was extended to Bath in 1726 while the Frome was obstructed by weirs.[89]

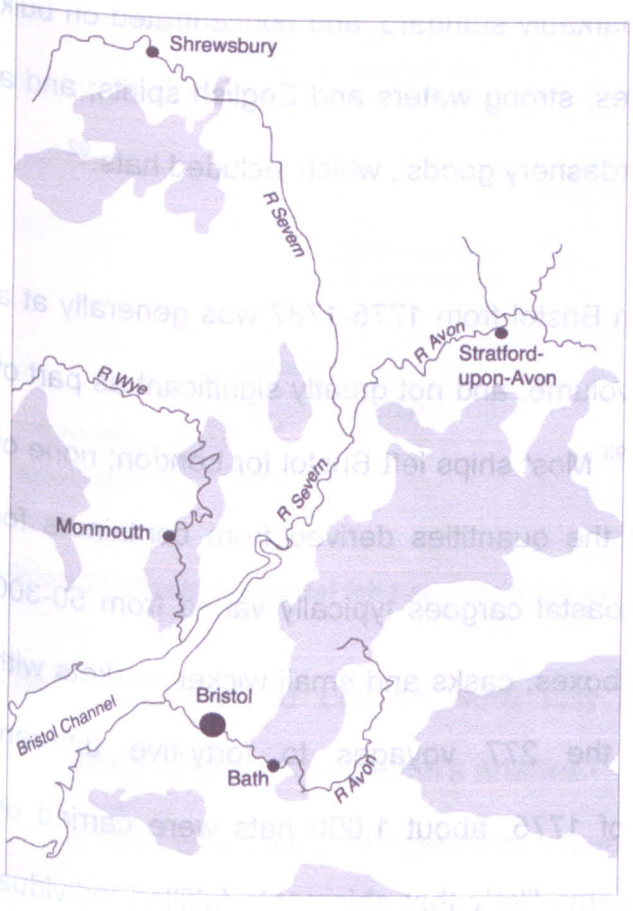

Figure 37: Bristol's riverine hinterland from c. 1650.

Macmillan 1977), pp. 42-44; John Armstrong and Philip S Bagwell, 'Coastal Shipping', pp. 142-143, Chapter 5, in Derek Howard Aldcroft and Michael J Freeman, *Transport in the industrial revolution* (MUP 1983); J. Armstrong, 'The significance of coastal shipping in British domestic transport, 1550–1830', *International Journal of Maritime History, Vol.* 3, No. 2, 1991, pp. 84–85; and Hussey, *Coastal*, pp. 14-20.

[88] T S Willan, 'The River Navigation and Trade of the Severn Valley, 1600-1750', *The Economic History Review*, Vol. 8, No. 1, November 1937, p. 79. There is a considerable list of sources in Hussey, *Coastal*, fn. 14, p. 211, including Minchinton, 'Metropolis', p. 71.

[89] Minchinton, 'Metropolis', fn. 1, and p. 71. Also, Figure 1: *Frontispiece*.

Although Bristol had a radial network of packhorse roads through Somerset and Devon to support the wool trade after the closing of Exeter as a staple port in 1693, there continued a strong reliance on coastal shipping.[90] Willan described this traffic as operating on 'merely a river around England'.[91] The *Agreement of Bideford* was employed around 1700 almost exclusively as the local Bristol-Bideford packet, making between five and six round trips a year. Its cargoes from Bristol were 'remarkably standard' and concentrated on bulk iron goods and ironmongers' wares; strong waters and English spirits; and a 'rather motley assortment of haberdashery goods', which included hats.[92]

The coastal trade in felt hats from Bristol from 1775-1787 was generally at a low level, about 5% of its export volume, and not greatly significant as part of the city's manufacturing capacity.[93] Most ships left Bristol for London; none of those found carried hats. Using the quantities derived from containers for international exports, individual coastal cargoes typically varied from 50-300 hats and were usually packed in boxes, casks and small wicker baskets with handles called *maunds*.[94] Of the 277 voyages to forty-five different destinations in the second half of 1775, about 1,000 hats were carried on twelve ships to nine ports.[95] It seems likely that shipments fulfilled individual

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[90] E Kerridge, *Textile manufactures in early modern England* (Manchester 1985), pp. 146-147.
[91] Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities*, pp. 245-256, cites Willan, but the reference is unfound.
[92] Hussey, *Coastal*, p. 30.
[93] TNA, E 190.1230, 1233, 1236, 1238. The records in four quarters, one each from 1775, 1779, 1783 and 1787, were sampled, to assess the level of the trade. As the volumes were low, no further years were investigated.
[94] Quantities of hats in containers are discussed in Chapter 6: *Overseas trade, 1550-1855* and Appendix 40: *Counting the hats, 1679-1855*. Also, Appendix 26: *Coastal trade, 1775-1787*.
[95] 24/6-25/12/1775 (TNA, E 190/1230/5).

orders from Bristol wholesalers to coastal retailers and that, at this time, most domestic orders were sent overland. The principal ports were St Ives, 20% of hats shipped in the study period, and Bideford and Falmouth, 18% each.[96] Perhaps most interesting is the trade with Carmarthen which, then, had its own flourishing felt hat manufacture.[97]

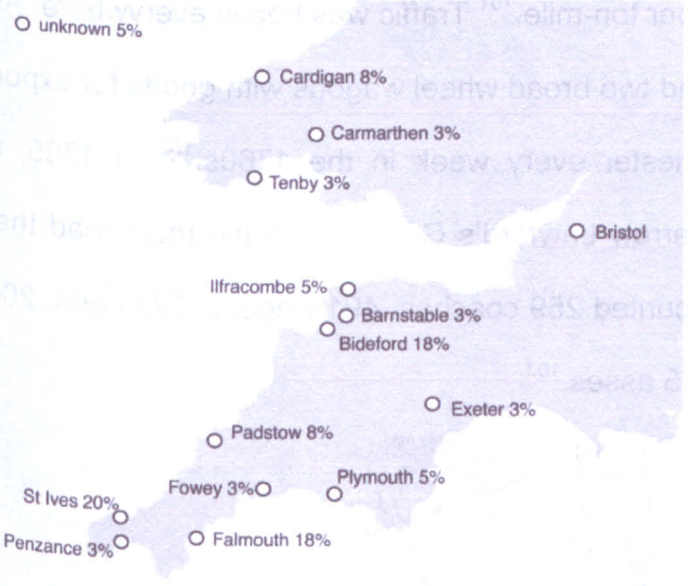

Figure 38: Bristol's coastal felt hat shipments by port, 1775-1787.

The 125.5 miles to London were fully turnpiked by 1750, the earliest completion of one of the capital's arteries.[98] Resistance to the turnpikes of the Bristol Trust was both prolonged and violent.[99] The fight's importance here is that the colliers and farmers from around the feltmaking villages were closely

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[96] The ports for almost 5% of 'felt hat' voyages were indecipherable because of damaged pages.
[97] Appendix 27: *Hatters of Carmarthenshire, 1633-1901*.
[98] Albert, *Turnpike Road*, p. 42.
[99] John James, *The History and Topography of Bradford* (London, 1841), p. 155. Arthur Young, *A Six Weeks Tour through the Southern Counties of England and Wales* (London 1768), p. 260; cited in Albert, *Turnpike Road*, p. 26. For turnpike resistance by the colliers and farmers near the hatters' villages, see Albert, *Turnpike Road*, p. 28. For 1727 riots, Latimer, *Annals*, pp. 155-156 and *HCJ*, Vol. xxi, pp. 157, 159; 1735, Latimer, *Annals*, pp. 155-157 and Marcy, 'Roads', pp. 156-157.

involved. The hatters were not named, but can they have been asleep?[100] They were long-term users of the newly-taxed road for the carriage of their hats into Bristol and someone had to pay the toll. On the turnpike's opening, it cost 6.3d-8.3d per ton-mile for carriage from London along the Western Road to Bristol which, in the same period, the carriage on old roads from London to Devon or Cornwall was 16d per ton-mile.[101] Traffic was heavy everywhere. An estimated 150 packhorses and two broad wheel wagons with goods for export came to Bristol from Manchester every week in the 1760s.[102] In 1765, a week's census at Bristol's narrow Lawford's Gate astride the main road that passed the hatting villages counted 259 coaches, 491 wagons, 722 carts, 206 drays, 11,759 horses, and 675 asses.[103]

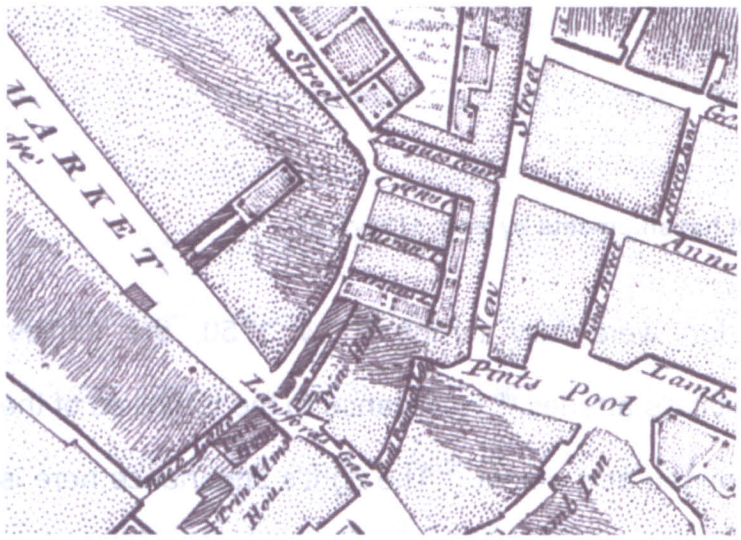

Figure 39: The Lawford's Gate pinch point, 1789.[104]

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[100] Two London hatters, employees of George Vaughan with a hat manufactory in Watley's End, were shot dead one night in the middle of the Gordon Riots as they tried to pull down the turnpike at Blackfriars Bridge (*Whitehall Evening Post*, 6/6/1780).
[101] Albert, *Turnpike Road*, pp. 173-175.
[102] Alfred P Wadsworth, and Julia de Lacy Mann, *The Cotton Trade and Industrial Lancashire 1600-1780* (MUP 1931), p. 227.
[103] Week of 2/6/1785 (*FFBJ*, 7/12/1765) cited in Marcy, 'Roads', p. 158.
[104] William Barrett, *The History and Antiquities of the City of Bristol* (1789, reprint Alan Sutton 1982).

The hatters benefitted with other Bristol industries when canals were built from the 1760s. The Society of Merchant Venturers was 'heavily involved in promoting the canal between Stourbridge and Dudley'. The Worcester and Staffordshire Canal gave further access to the Midlands; the Hawford and Droitwich Canal to Birmingham.[105] As well as opening potential markets for their own hats, these road and water connections allowed incoming London hatters alternative access from Bristol to their sister hat manufactories south of Manchester, particularly around Stockport.[106] Although many cases of hats were sent to and from Bristol by canal, 'these had to be sealed because the boatmen on this route were such abominable thieves'.[107]

Adam Smith legitimised the retailing tradesman in 1776, along with the distributive trades, when he accorded them a positive role in the economy. He explained that as separate and efficient components of the price of the goods their separate skills helped to keep the price down.[108] He also stood previous devotion to the manufacturer on its head and replaced him with the consumer as central to national wealth. 'Consumption is the sole end and purpose of all production; and the interests of the producer ought to be attended to only in so far as it may be necessary for promoting that of the consumer'.[109] For all

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[105] Marcy, 'Roads', p. 170; Grahame Farr, 'Severn Navigation and the Trow', *The Mariner's Mirror*, Vol. 32, No. 2, April 1946, pp. 66-95.

[106] This had far-reaching consequences for, for instance, the Christy works in Frampton Cotterell in the nineteenth century and was one of the factors which led to its closure.

[107] William Barber, *The Chronicles of Canal Street c1807-1868* (Private 1868, Christy & Co, reprint 1965, notes by John Christie-Miller, 1965), pp. 9, 16. Also, for route development and charges, G L Turnbull, *Pickfords, 1750-1920: A Study in the Development of Transportation* (unpublished PhD thesis, Glasgow University, 1972).

[108] Smith, *Wealth*, Vol. 2, pp. 28-32. Cox, *Tradesman*, pp. 27-28.

[109] Smith, *Wealth*, p. 155.

the rehabilitation of retailers and Bristol's commercial progress, Horace Walpole memorably described the city, also in 1776, as 'the dirtiest great shop, with so foul a river, populated by insatiable, low-born creatures of mammon'.[110] A few years later, a British trade directory was more charitable, 'the heart of the city is rather closely built, but the streets are now much widened and improved, and several are totally rebuilt. The city has of late years been newly paved, with smooth pavements on the sides for foot-passengers, executed very neatly. It has long been lighted with lamps, but of late they have been increased, and the lighting is exceeded only in London'.[111]

Smith's intervention was timely from a hatting trade perspective. After the small-scale haberdashers, the Bristol hat manufacturers with new large warehouses became all powerful. About 1750, market control gradually moved to specialist, large, family-run wholesalers, and to bespoke shopkeepers with, at best, a storeroom and a back workroom for last minute adjustments to shape and size.[112] A major shift in distribution and retail was in progress. Defoe saw the shopkeepers in Bristol as 'in general ... all Wholesalemen [who] have so great an inland trade among all the western counties, that they maintain carriers just as the London tradesmen do'.[113] For

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[110] W S Lewis, edited, *Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, Yale edition, 2 vols. (Yale University Press 1941), p. X/232, cited in Bettey, *Observed*, p. 77, and Hussey, *Coastal*, p. xiv.
[111] Peter Barfoot, John Wilkes, *The Universal British Directory of Trade, Commerce, and Manufacture*, (c. 1791) Vol. 2, p. 119.. Marcy, 'Roads', p. 151.
[112] Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities*, pp. 39-40, on cost of entry to the hand trades.
[113] Defoe, *Tour*, cited in Bettey, *Observed*, p. 62.

Richard Grassby, retailing and wholesaling was inextricably combined and this was mostly the case with the city's hatters. 'Although defined as a direct sale to a customer, it was really a question of scale. The service trades all overlapped and most of those who kept a shop also dealt wholesale. In Bristol, Exeter, Liverpool and Southampton, there was no clear line'.[114] Untrained shopkeepers came to stand between the makers and the buyers 'even in the same parish'. Increasingly, 'so-called brass-founders, hatters and joiners', claimed Dorothy Davis, were now simply retailers who, whatever had been their early training, 'never, as masters, handled a tool or performed any creative process whatsoever'.[115] In Bath and Bristol combined, now large retail centres, the top rents were between £90-100.[116] In 1,769 shops, over £5 was paid, but up to 50% of the total outlets were small, low-cost properties.[117] Despite higher overheads, shops provided a 'permanent site of exchange and a continuous relationship between vendor and customer'.[118] They were a necessity in the bespoke part of the hat trade and highly desirable for the rapid turnover of cheaper hats.[119]

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[114] Grassby, *Business*, p. 64.

[115] Davis, *Shopping*, p. 62. Cox, 'Beggary', pp. 26-51. Anonymous, *England Revived*, cited in Cox, *Tradesman*, pp. 22-23.

[116] Muis, *Shops*, Appendix 2, pp. 298-299. National rents were assessed in 1785 for a successfully introduced, but short lived, shop tax.

[117] Muis, *Shops*, p. 87.

[118] Berger, 'Retail Trade', p. 128; David Alexander, *Retailing in England during the Industrial Revolution* (London, Athlone Press 1970), pp. 6, 127-128; Westerfield, *Middlemen*, pp. 338-339; Chartres, *Internal Trade*, pp. 48-50.

[119] Also, William Cobbett, *Rural Rides in the Southern Western and Eastern Counties of England Together with a Tour in Scotland and in the Northern and Midland Counties of England and Letters from Ireland*, edited G D H and Margaret Cole (1835, reprint London, Davies 1930), Vol. iii, p. 510.

Figure 40: Wholesale or retail? Steadman's warehouse, Union Street, Bristol, c. 1852.[120]

The seriousness of the change, and the long-term decline in Company membership it accompanied, was recognised in 1768 when the masters reduced quarterage to two shillings a year as it 'may be a means of inducing some that have a right to take up their freedom'.[121] The masters agreed to make up from their own pockets any resulting shortfall in the Company's expenses. The influence of the Company had waned and most established independent retailers were not interested in membership or, indeed, applied for freedom.

Wholesaling interests saw the fairs 'degenerate into pleasure haunts for the working class with little or no serious trading function'.[122] In 1785, Thomas Davies of the Bristol-funded London firm, Davies, Owen, Swanton & Co, travelled to Chester and Wrexham provincial fairs with hopes of securing

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[120] Blaise Castle Museum, Braikenridge Collection, 7A 5738.
[121] 27/10/1768 (BRO, 08156/2), p. 291.
[122] Alexander, *Retailing*, pp. 34-35.

orders for 200 hats.[123] He came away with nothing, but 'time and money lost' and refused to attend fairs the following year.[124] By the end of the eighteenth century, 'the fair had long since fallen into desuetude', concentrating on livestock, some foodstuffs, and popular entertainment. In Bristol, it was all 'vice, disorder and irreligion'.[125] Among the millinery and haberdashery, 'exhibitions of wild beasts and birds, wax-work, wire-dancing, tumbling, puppets, Punch and his wife Joan, sea-fights, conjuration, magic and mummery of all sorts'.[126] If the trader waited

> until the return of the Fair to lay in his yearly stock of goods, this is now superseded, as he has travelling clerks from all sorts of houses connected with his business waiting upon him every month for his orders, and he sees them executed by canals, barges, fly-waggons, vans, stage-coaches, or steam packets.[127]

The pedlar was also fast disappearing.[128] Both fair and pedlar were being replaced by greater and more immediate competition led by improved transport, communications, and commercial travellers that 'allowed the shopkeeper to order goods when and as he needed them and from whomever he wished'.[129]

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[123] Letter 19/2/1785 (TNA, C 12/1263/19).
[124] Corner, 'Tyranny', p. 168.
[125] Rev George Charles Smith, *Bristol Fair, but no Preaching!* (Bristol, Clark 1823), No. 5.
[126] *Mathews' Business Directory, 1793-4*, pp. 42-43. One hundred bush houses - drinking booths - opened at St James Fair in 1815 (Hulbert, 'Fairs'), p. 21.
[127] Smith, *Bristol Fair*, p. 3, cited in Alexander, pp. 32-33.
[128] Westerfield, *Middlemen*, pp. 316-317. For a European perspective on the demise of the pedlar, Laurence Fontaine, translated Vicki Whittaker, *History of Pedlars in Europe* (Durham, NC, Duke University 1996), pp. 140-163. For a brief discussion on pedlars and the village hat trade, Chapter 7: *Difference, 1700-1855*.
[129] Muis, *Shops*, p. 27.

Ceremony, however, remained important. In 1794, a city guide claimed twenty-four companies, led by the Merchant Venturers.[130] 'These companies had heretofore their halls, gowns, flags and formalities; now some of their trades are nearly extinct, others are dissipated, and a few still remain who precede the mayor when he goes in procession to the Cathedral.' The first Company Hall is not noted, but events were common at the *Sun* at Cutler's Mills.[131] In 1729, an election and accounting day dinner cost £5 19s at an unnamed venue. Hall was also held at the *White Lion* in 1736; rum that year cost 16s. In 1762, William Bell broke a bowl for which the Company paid 2s 9d. Other inns were the *Artichoke*, *Bell*, *Goat*, *Ship* and *George*. In 1792, with membership at low ebb, the Company voted to move its Hall to the *Bush Tavern*, renowned for its food; turtles were served every day. Christmas Day lunch in 1790 had 155 options, thirty-four of which were cold dishes.[132] By 1803, the Company was eating at the *Montague* and, in 1835, at the *Greyhound*.[133]

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[130] The other twenty-three companies, in the order listed, were Taylors, Weavers, Surgeons, Smiths, Hoopers, Whiteawers, Dyers, Joiners, Wire-drawers, Cordwainers, Tanners, Butchers, Bakers, Inn-holders, Sadlers, Hatters, Turners, Pipe-makers, Carpenters, Halliers, Porters, Tylers and Masons (W Matthews, *The New History Survey and Description of the City and Suburbs of Bristol, of complete Guide*, 1794), p. 49.

[131] There are claims in the Company minute book for £2 1s 10d in 1728; £1 7s 11d in 1735; and £1 8s 8d in 1736 (BRO, 08156/2).

[132] BRO, 14182(HB)/X/28.

[133] Some loose dinner bills, tucked into pages of the second volume of the minute book, survive: 1798, £8 12s; 1803, £4 19s 2d at the Montague; 1804, £6; and 1835, £7 5s at the Greyhound (BRO, 08156/2).

Figure 41: The Bush Tavern, Bristol, for coaches to London and Exeter, c. 1790.[134]

The Hat Duty Act was a part of Pitt's budget of 1784 which brought in a long, disparate list of new subjects for taxation required to reduce the national debt.[135] The hat tax, 6s a dozen on felt hats and 24s a dozen on 'castor and mixed hats', was immediately disliked by trade and public and evasion was commonplace.[136]

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[134] C F W Denning and Maurice Fells, *Old Inns of Bristol*, third edition (Bristol, Wright 1941), final page.

[135] This included the Shop Tax, discussed previously. For background, Daunton, *Progress and Poverty*, pp. 516-517; Ron Harris, 'Government and the economy, 1688-1850', Fiscal policy: taxation and expenditure, in Roderick Floud and Paul Johnson, edited, *The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Britain*: Vol. 1: Industrialisation, 1700-1860 (CUP 2004), pp. 214-224.

[136] *FFBJ*, 17/7/1784. 24 George III, c. 51. Even Lord Byron passed comment, mocking William Wordsworth, then working in the Stamp Office: 'I shall think of him oft when I buy a new hat: There his works will appear' (*The Blues*, II 60-1). The stamp tax was increased in the budget of 1796, reimposed in 1804, and finally repealed in 1811. 'Questions soon arose as to what was and what was not a hat within the charge ... the duties were reimposed in terms to include all substances from which a hat could be made, and every sort of hat by whatever name called or distinguished (Stephen Dowell, *A History of Taxation and Taxes in England*, Vol. II, Longmans, Green, 1888), p. 389. Re-imposition: 44 George III, c. 98: wool, stuff, beaver, leather, japanned, felt, wool, leather, or any mixture. Repeal: 51 Geo III, c. 70. Spencer Perceval: '...it should be generally known that the taxes on hats and gloves were given up as impracticable and unproductive, the intelligence would not be thrown away on those gentlemen who, in their anxiety to assist the Chancellor of the Exchequer in discovering new objects for taxation, honoured him with their communications. There was not an article of dress ... not an article in a house which had not been frequently recommended ... as objects of taxation' (Dowell, *Taxation*), pp. 239-40. 'Ever since I have been in office I have found the tax on hats to be the uniform subject of complaint and it has been eternally represented as productive of great inconvenience to the fair dealer'. The tax yield fell over almost thirty years from £60,000 to £29,000. 'It was not to be supposed that people did now wear as many hats as formerly ... the revenue was defrauded' (Dowell, *Taxation*), pp. 389-390.

Figure 42: La Bonnet Rouge - or - John Bull evading the hat tax, 1797.[137]

The hatters of Gloucester advertised that they would continue to sell hats at the 'usual low prices until Friday next ... on which day the duty commences'.[138] The *Bath Chronicle* explained that the 'manufacturer is to have nothing to do with the duty. The retailer is to procure and place a proper stamp in the inside of the hat.'[139] The paper also announced that the annual licences for 'country hat-makers is reduced...from ten to five shillings'.[140]

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[137] James Gillray cartoon with John Bull standing in front of the shop premises of Billy Blacksoul, hatter and sword cutler (Pitt), now a stamp office, licensed to deal in those items (© National Portrait Gallery, NPG D12607, published 5/4/1797).

[138] *Gloucester Journal*, 27/9/1784.

[139] *Bath Chronicle*, 15/7/1784, 19/8/1784. Appendix 28: *Provisions of the Hat Duty Act, 1784.*

[140] A search at TNA did not uncover any of these licence records. The licence cost 40s in London and its neighbourhood. Hatters were also required to have their 'letters up,' in revenue language, that is, his name and the words 'Dealer in Hats by retail,' over the door of his shop ...The hatter was required to 'make, in the customer's bill, a separate charge for the stamps. A drawback was allowed on exportation. Hats in packages of two dozen might be exported without stamp tickets; and the manufacture was protected by additional duties on imported hats and caps' (Dowell, *Taxation*), p. 388.

Bristol hatters Dowells & Ewer were convinced they were losing revenue due to competition from straw hats made by Napoleonic prisoners at Portsmouth and Plymouth who worked for small payments and ignored the Hat Duty Act. The firm wrote to their MP, Charles Bragge, asking for orders to stop the prisoners.[141] Bragge took the matter to Prime Minister Pitt who asked for further information. Dowells & Ewer estimated a weekly trade to English seamen at the southern ports of up to 3,000 wool felt hats. Straw hats were already a threat to the feltmakers and the firm kept a close eye on Dunstable, Bedfordshire, the burgeoning straw hat centre.[142] Bragge asked how Dowells & Ewer manufactured hats 'so as to enable lower classes' to buy them and heard that

> children's and youths' hats are sold by us from 10d per hat and men's from 1s per hat upwards to the highest price. So, it is evident that the poor person is not relieved in the price by the purchase of a straw hat so manufactured in the French prisons. But the greater grievance that we experience and complain of arises from our loss of trade at Portsmouth and Plymouth where the demand from the seamen of H.M. Ships for our manufacture from 18d to 6s per hat has formerly during a war proved a most seasonable relief to us.[143]

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[141] 15/3/1799, one of three letters (GA, D421/X7/19-21). Appendix 29: *Correspondence on straw hats and excise duty, 1799*. Charles Bragge inherited the Lydney estate in Gloucestershire; in 1804 he took his mother's maiden name of Bathurst. Charles Bragge Bathurst was in Parliament from 1790 to 1823; Treasurer of the Navy, 1801-03; and Secretary-at-War, 1803-04 (GA, Lydney Park Estate, D421).

[142] John Dony, *A History of the Straw Hat Industry* (Luton, Gibbs, Bamforth 1942). The 'manufactures of straw work, especially straw hats, spreads itself from Hertfordshire into [Bedfordshire] and is wonderfully enc[re]ased within a few years past' (Defoe, *Tour*), Vol 2, p. 114. 'About Dunstable and Luton they make straw hats and other things of that sort, which manufacturers find business for several thousand people (Samuel Simpson, *The Agreeable Historian or The Complete English Traveller*, Vol. 1, London, R Walker, 1746), p. 2.

[143] The problem may have also been closer to home in Stapleton, near Bristol. 'The Old French Prison, so called from its having been built and used during the war with France. ... The prisoners were allowed to make toys and other articles, a market being held in the week, in the court of the prison, for the sale of such things. Many of the prisoners were highly skilled artisans. This building is now used as the Bristol Union Workhouse (A Braine, *The History of*

Dowells & Ewer referred to the Government's lost revenue and asserted that

> not a [French straw] hat is ever sold with the stamp that the Act requires that every sort of hat shall have affixed ... It is necessary to remark, from the lowness of the price, they are become such a species of traffic with the Jews and others of the lowest description that a respectable shopkeeper will have nothing to do with the sale of straw hats. The revenue is in consequence suffering very materially by such an evasion as will many manufacturers in this City and neighbourhood with the loss of considerable trade.

Later that year, the Dowells & Ewer letter rebounded spectacularly on their fellow feltmakers and it was only through a personal intervention by Joel Gardiner that several of his colleagues were saved from prosecution by the Government. The Bristol felt makers were shocked into an emergency company meeting as writs were 'served upon many [of the Company's] individuals for selling hats unstamped'.[144] Gardiner with six others rapidly sent a petition to the Stamp Office.[145] Estcourt replied that criminal proceedings would be deferred on payment of £10 each plus costs despite 'various complaints of the irregularity at Bristol'. The penalty was mitigated because of the claim that the offence arose from 'inadvertence and not by design'. The Commissioners hoped that the hatters would be 'more careful in future'.[146] Joel Gardiner replied immediately that he had let the Bristol Company know the outcome and, in careful positioning, hoped there would be 'no reason to

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the Kingswood Forest, Bristol, 1891). Also Dorothy Vintner, 'Prisoners of War in Stapleton jail, near Bristol', *TBGAS*, Vol. 75, 1976, pp. 134-170.

[144] 4/11/1799 (BRO, 08156), p. 543.

[145] Letter 20/11/1799, Edmund Estcourt at the Stamp Office (GA, D421/X7/20). 8/11/1799 (BRO, 08156), p. 541. George King, that year's master, formed an action committee: Thomas Deering, Thomas Ransford and Christopher Viner of 6 Bridge Street (1775, Sketchley's). Morgan was also of Bridge Street (1793-4, Matthew's).

[146] Edmund Estcourt (GA, D421/X7/20).

find fault with any evasion whatever as [the Bristol hatmakers] have all given their servants positive orders to abide by the duty fixed upon each hat'.[147]

At the time of the wholesale revolution in hatting, Bristol produced its first trade directories.[148] These directories, together with cards, poll books, and miscellaneous leases and press reports, produce records of over 1,000 hatter businesses.[149] Among Company members, the trade terms 'feltmaker' and 'haberdasher' disappeared to be replaced by the principals of family-managed hatting firms. The Company became an unimportant shell, a working boss's social club of small membership.

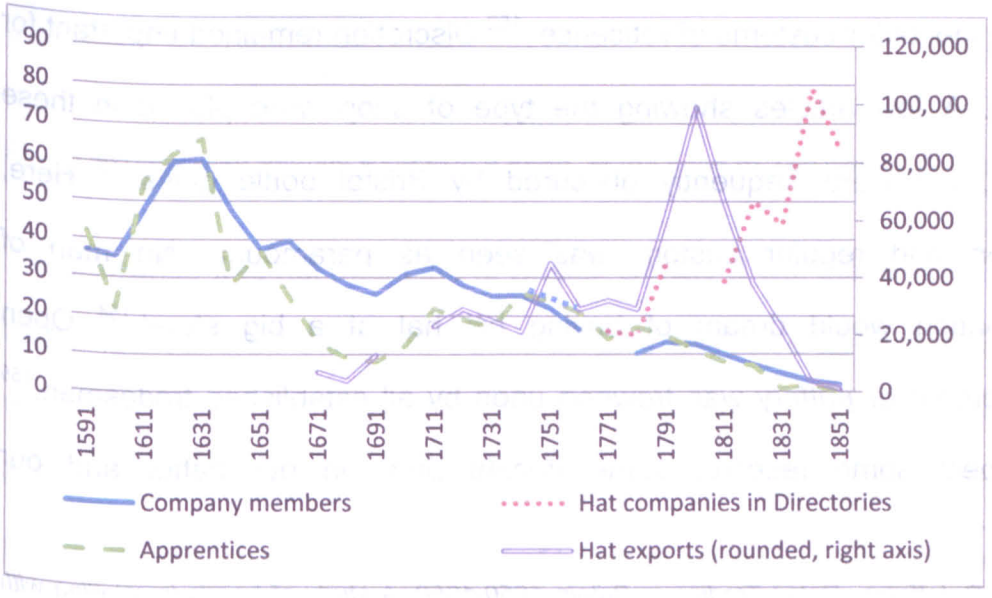

Figure 43: Bristol hatters: economic activity, 1591-1851.[150]

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[147] Letter 5/12/1799, Joel Gardiner & Sons to the Stamp Office (GA, D421/X7/21).
[148] Bristol Trade Directories: *Sketchley*, 1775; *Bailey*, 1783-87; *Browne*, 1785; *Reed*, 1792; *Matthews*, 1793-1850; *Pigot*, 1822-1844; *Pigot*, Gloucestershire *Post Office*, 1856; *Slater*, 1852; *Webster*, 1865 (BCL, GA).
[149] Appendix 30: *Bristol hatters, 1620-1915*. Appendix 31: *Burials in woollens, 1709-1740*.
[150] Company membership figures are decennial means. There are no membership records between 1771-1780.

Retail shops became utilitarian with their offerings expanded to include anything for the head, and women's and children's wear. This change had nothing to do with the Company's heritage, but most could recognise a shopping revolution and members and non-members alike set out to make money from it. Haggling, higgling or chaffering as to the price between the seller and customer was common to practically all retailing. Haberdashers were particularly noted for the practice, but 'very few retailers ever clearly and openly marked the prices of their goods or expected the customer to pay the asking price promptly without question'.[151] Flamboyant window displays, advertisement by retailers and the use of clearly marked prices gradually replaced the 'older customs of reticence'.[152] Discretion remained important for the elite. A few articles showing the type of shop were placed in these windows, but were frequently obscured by Bristol bottle glass.[153] Here, reputation and regular custom was seen as paramount. 'No man of discrimination would dream of buying his hat at a big store'.[154] Open advertisement or *puffery* was frowned upon by all established tradesmen.[155] 'We expect some reserve, some decent pride in our hatter and our

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[151] James B Jefferys, *Retail Trading in Britain 1850-1950, A study of trends in retailing with special reference to the development of the Co-operative, multiple shop and department store methods of trading*, The National Institute of Economic and Social Research, Economic and Social Studies XIII (CUP 1954), p. 5. Some debt information has been found for *Mouys and Jarritt*, high class London hatters. Calculations from their journal suggest that turnover in 1804 amounted to just £780 (TNA, C 103/191), cited in Alexander, *Retailing*, p. 165. The firm received payment in cash in fifteen days for only about 22% of this, about 30% within one month and a further 7% within one to three months. The remaining 63% was either uncollectable or outstanding for long periods. 'If the firm did not receive payment in cash or fifteen days the probability of collecting the account within a year was less than 50%' (Alexander, *Retailing*), p. 177.

[152] Jefferys, *Retail Trading*, p. 6.

[153] Jefferys, *Retail Trading*, p. 4.

[154] T B Macaulay, 'Mr Robert Montgomery's Poems, and the Modern Practice of Puffing', *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. 51, April 1830, p. 197.

[155] Jefferys, *Retail Trading*, p. 4.

bootmaker'.[156] The really smart hatters had small, old-fashioned shops, and a strange intimacy existed. 'When a son came of age his father brought him to be introduced.'[157]

Figure 44: Discreet: William Ransford's shop, at the head of The Pithay, Bristol, 1825.[158]

This reticence was not restricted to Bristol. Christy & Co, the 'first house in the trade', leased 1-1A Old Bond Street as their exclusive London shop, which would sell, among others, hats from Frampton Cotterell. There was considerable unease among the partners about this step into retailing. Sensitivity was shown to the stigma of being in the retail trade in a record of a conversation with the lessor and in a Christy partners' resolution.[159]

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[156] Macaulay, 'Montgomery's Poems', p. 197.
[157] Frederick Willis, *A Book of London Yesterdays* (London, Phoenix House 1960), p. 152.
[158] J E Pritchard, 'The Pithay, Bristol', *TBGAS*, Vol. 48, 1926, facing p. 251 (after Edward Cashin, probably Blaise Castle Museum, Braikenridge Collection).
[159] Appendix 32: *Christy's and the perception of retailing, 1851.* '[Our customers] all, less or more, require odd hats, single hats, retail hats. The Colonies & Europe furnish us many customers. They want single retail hats. We wish to have a West End establishment, for they will not come down into the City with their sons and servants. We have much running up to the West End after them. Also, wholesale people, we wish to have an assortment of very first

Few account books from retail shops generally survive for the beginning of the nineteenth century and fewer provide data for estimating annual turnovers.[160] Only one record of a Bristol hat firm from has been found from this period, but it is extensive and the firm was large.[161] Lydia Dando complained on behalf of her two children in 1827 that Joseph Dando and Thomas Heaven had misused their positions as testators of her dead husband, Jehoiada, with whom they had been in partnership as Dando, Heaven and Co. The bill transferred to Chancery where the surviving partners strongly defended their position.[162] They admitted large profits were distributed from 1810-1815. Among many errors, the profits ignored the debts; essentially the partners claimed to be incompetent book-keepers. Their response listed 860 debts totalling £10,613 10s and gave other useful information on profit and loss and turnover to 1822. These debts, essentially from regional retail hat outlets, can be worked to provide good data on the nature of the business, its reach, and the reasons for its failure.

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rate goods to supply these people, their friends & all who may come to us, that we may keep ourselves before the public' (CA, John Christy statement 5/2/1851).

[160] Grassby, 'Merchant capitalism', p. 88.

[161] The only comprehensive book of debts found is that of the Christy's in the middle of the nineteenth century (CA). This is discussed later. The importance of the firms of the Dando family is deduced from a study of seventy Bristol hatting firms, 1750-1909. Dando's was undoubtedly one of the largest based on their turnover, employees, premises and marketing material.

[162] 21/7/1827 (TNA, C 13/871/39).

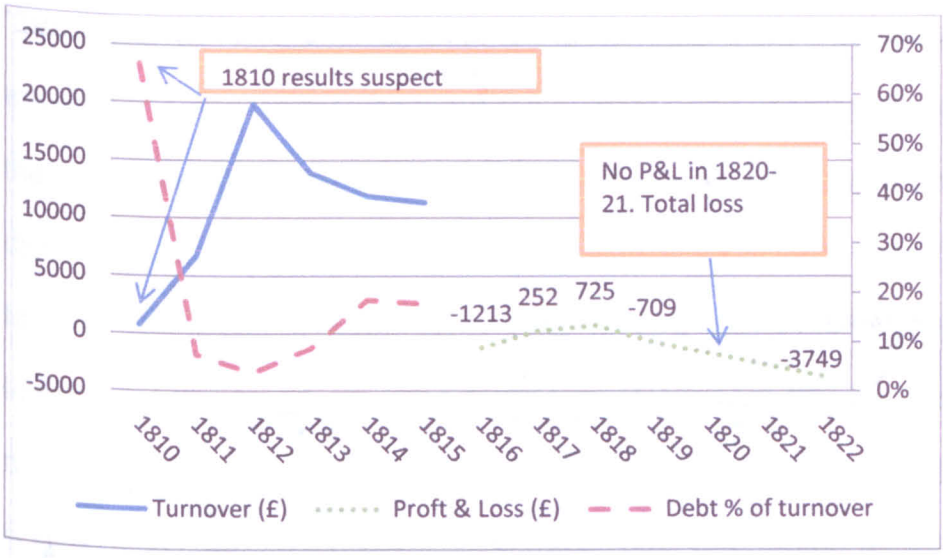

Figure 45: Dando, Heaven & Co performance, 1810-1822.

Dando, Heaven grew rapidly to £20,000 turnover in 1812 which then halved over the next three years. At the same time, debt climbed to an unsustainble 20%. If, as the partners claimed, they were still taking cash dividends, the slump in profit and loss from 1815, and collapse in 1822, is unsurprising.

Debtors' addresses show the geographic spread of the firm's business. If the debts are taken as an approximate, but steady, relationship to actual revenue, Dando, Heaven conducted 11% of their trade between 1811-1815 in the immediate area of Bristol and Gloucestershire. A further 61% took place in the 'home' region of the west of England and South Wales (shown by the full-line arrows on the figure). 'Home' can be extended to almost 80% by the inclusion of Wiltshire business (shown in the south of England territory). Activity in the rest of the 'South', and in the 'South East', centres on the Channel ports where there is partial evidence that this is based on naval and military garrisons.

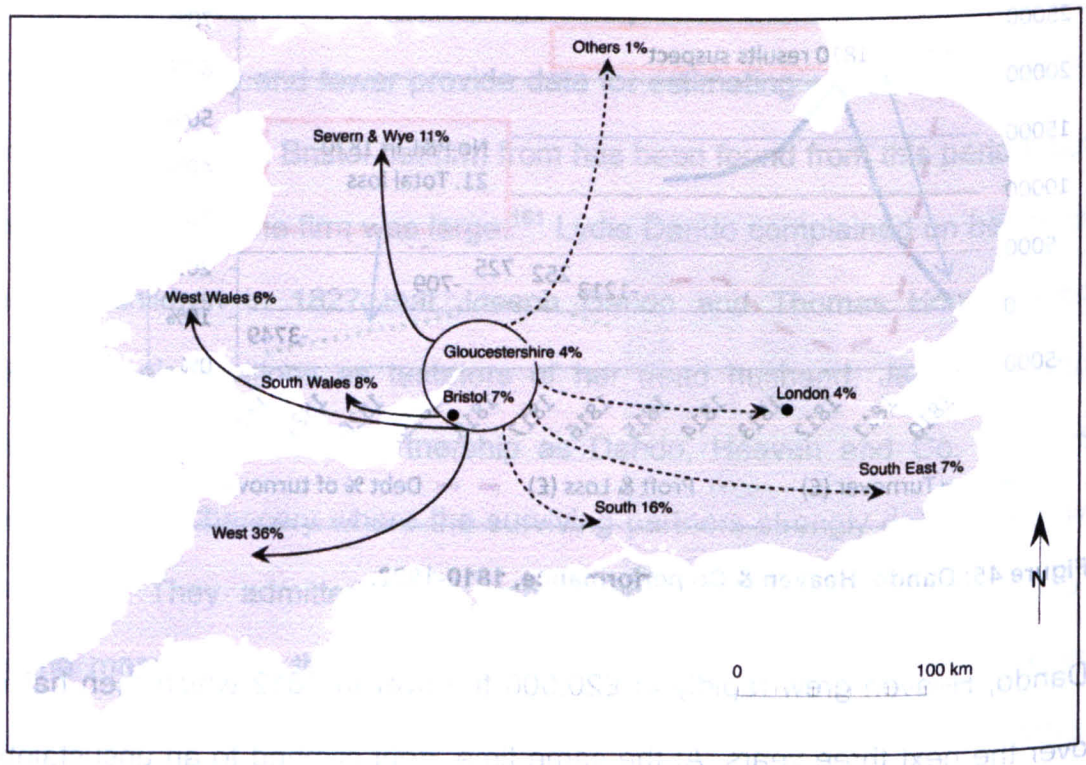

Figure 46: Dando, Heaven's business in England and Wales, 1811-1815.

By far the largest individual debts were in London, averaging over £250; the 'West', 'South' and 'West Wales' had the next largest average at up to £15. While the total amount of debt in the 'West' was the highest, reflecting the 36% of overall business done there, it was accrued debt across the board that put paid to the business.[163]

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[163] Close and successful branches of the Dando family with hat businesses in London and New York were responsible for small amounts of the debt. In London, Stephen Dando was elected Master of the Worshipful Company of Feltmakers in 1828 (Weinstein, *Feltmakers*), p. 130. Another Stephen became a naturalised American in 1799, was a prominent Methodist, and, after several moves, opened one of New York's most fashionable hat stores just off Broadway (Dee Andrews, *The Methodists and Revolutionary America, 1760-1800: Shaping Evangelical Culture*, 2000), p. 117; application for naturalisation: 1799 (Southern District of New York, US District Court, New York, Minute 1140 (*Naturalizations in Federal Courts, New York District, 1790-1828*); naturalisation: 1802, New York (Kenneth Scott, *Early New York Naturalizations, Abstracts of Naturalization Records from Federal, State, and Local Courts, 1792-1840*, Baltimore, Genealogical Publishing Co, 1999); *The New York American*, 19/2/1822; *New York Daily Advertiser*, 18/11/1822, reprinted in *The Nic-Nac or Oracle of Knowledge*, 1824, p. 148; Thomas J Frusciano and Marilyn H Pettit, *New York University and the City: An Illustrated History*, 1996, p. 26.

The backbone of the Bristol hatters' wholesale trade was the commercial traveller or *ambassador* who 'travelled by horse and spent up to six months on the road, sending back orders by post every week or fortnight and working a district until he had written enough orders to stock it for a year'.[164] A P Allen felt the 'ambassador must be truly a representative of the opinions and interests of those at home, always remembering that his success and theirs are identical, never playing into the enemy's hands ... He must be a man of originality and strong individuality, perfectly free and untrammelled'.[165]

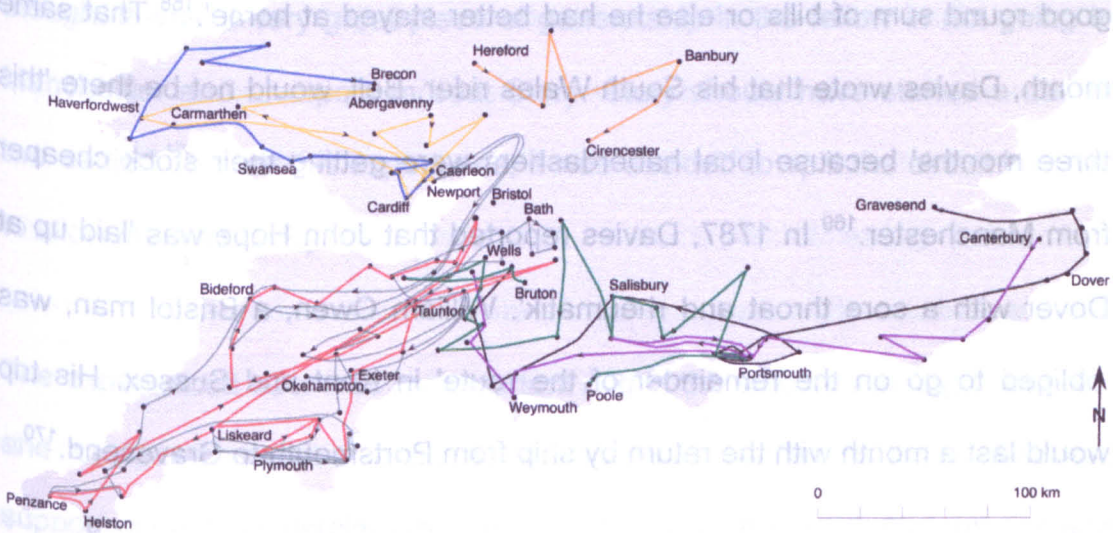

Figure 47: Rides of Dando's commercial travellers, 1810-1815.

Dando, Heaven's rides early in the nineteenth century can be reassembled from their debtor's schedule, using a progression through the towns and

[164] A P Allen, *The Ambassadors of Commerce* (London, Fisher, Unwin 1898), p. 102. *The Commercial Travellers' Magazine* (First published 1856).
[165] Allen, *Ambassadors*, pp. 15-16.

villages based on the dates orders were taken.[166] The regionality of the trade is apparent.

The Bristol-funded Davies, Owen, Swanton & Co, used three riders in 1785.[167] Their function was specified in letters: to solicit orders, to collect payments and remit bills to London, and to send information on regional fashions. The collection of unpaid bills was as important a function as securing orders. In February 1785, Davies said of Story, one of his riders, that he would 'expect a good round sum of bills or else he had better stayed at home'.[168] That same month, Davies wrote that his South Wales rider, Bell, would not be there 'this three months' because local haberdashers were getting their stock cheaper from Manchester.[169] In 1787, Davies reported that John Hope was 'laid up at Dover with a sore throat and rheumatik'. William Owen, a Bristol man, was 'obliged to go on the remainder of the route' in Kent and Sussex. His trip would last a month with the return by ship from Portsmouth to Gravesend.[170]

Davies's hinterland was divided into routes which were carefully drawn to take in as many provincial retailers as possible. The rider on the North Wales circuit had around 300 miles to cover: Holyhead, Whitford, Ruthin, Abergele, Betws-yn-Rhos, Penmorfa, Couvin, Hangollin, Harlech, Barmouth, Mallywd

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[166] Appendix 33: *Examples of Dando's rides, 1810-1815.* Appendix 34: *Debts, Dando, Heaven, 1810-1815.*
[167] The next four paragraphs are edited from Corner, 'Tyranny', p 168, with additional material from TNA, C 12/1263/19.
[168] Davies letter, 17/2/1785 (TNA, C 12/1263/19).
[169] Davies letter to James Jones, 19/2/1785 (TNA, C 12/1263/19).
[170] Davies letter to James Jones, 29/3/1787 (TNA, C 12/1263/19).

and Hanmer.[171] It was especially important to send out a rider at the right moment: too early in advance of demand from the shopkeepers meant wasted effort; too late and he might be beaten by a rival. In August 1785, Davies heard that Story had set off from Stockport on the northern circuit. By mid-August, Davies learnt that a rival salesman from *Normans* had reached Carlisle first. This was a 'mortifying circumstance', but Davies still hoped that Story would 'steal a march'. Story then sent a letter with just three small orders and explained that *Norman's* rider had beaten him all the way. Davies thought it was 'a very great piece of generalship in the fellow in not going to Manchester and Liverpool to beat Story. Story should have started a day or two earlier'.[172] After this experience, it was decided to split the circuit into two to allow more flexibility.

The experienced rider was an important cog in the smooth running of the firm and could command a large salary. In 1850, a Dando scion, Charles, supported the Commercial Travellers' Schools and their work for 'orphans and necessitous children'.[173] Story was later 'bribed' to the rival firm of *Normans* with an offer of £200 a year. To replace him, Davies took another rival's man, paying him £120 and commission, but he had to provide his own horse and

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[171] Couvin and Hangollin would fit the route better as Corwen and Llangollen. Abergele, Barmouth, Harlech, Holyhead and Ruthin stand as small towns. Penmorfa could be a stopping place for Porthmadog. Hanmer, Mallywyd or Whitford are puzzling because they are small hamlets, but they could be overnight stops; presumably that applies also to Betws-yn-Rhos. On a route of, say, Hanmer, Llangollen, Corwen, Ruthin, Whitford, Abergele, Betws-yn-Rhos, Holyhead, Permorfa, Harlech, Barmouth and Mallywyd, could it be possible that coverage did not extend to some of Llandudno, Bangor, Caernarfon, Oswestry and Wrexham?

[172] Davies letters, 16, 17, 21, 22/8/1785 (TNA, C 12/1263/19).

[173] *BM*, 9/2/1850. Also, Allen, *Ambassadors*, throughout.

security of £1,000. There was a great deal of bargaining over the commission, which was eventually fixed at 3% of orders secured on less than six months' credit.[174]

To attract trade within Bristol, and to reach regional outlets between travellers' visits, retailers in Bristol utilised, primarily, advertisements in the newspapers, pattern cards and circulars.[175] Many of the advertisements concerned stock variety, freshly arrived goods, pricing information and excited claims. Bristol retailers often stated that they 'had just received' or 'returned from London' with a large assortment of the newest fashion. The advertisements were simple announcements of fresh stock. Dando's in 1841 brought their patent elastic hat guard to the market. 'All who have travelled much have experienced the often disagreeable situation they have been in from losing their hats or caps'.[176] When Edwards announced a Dando as his new partner at Castle Green, he assured customers that it would be the firm's 'study to give them every satisfaction, by keeping a well selected stock, and executing their orders with punctuality and dispatch, and on moderate terms'.[177] Daniel Parsley set up at Clare Street after 'thirteen years foreman to Thomas & Norton and late of the firm of Dowell & Dale', all examples of an apprentice chain.[178] Already showing a confident style, Parsley proclaimed himself a first-class hat maker. 'For a good and a becoming hat go & try him. No perspiration

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[174] Davies letters, 21/4, 5/3/1886 (TNA, C 12/1263/19).
[175] Muis, *Shops*, p. 27.
[176] *BM*, 18/12/1841.
[177] *BM*, 19/7/1831. *Matthew's Bristol Directory*, 1830.
[178] Examples of Parsley's hats are held at the Blaise Castle Museum, Bristol.

can possibly show through these hats'.[179] Next year he called himself a 'real French hat maker'. With his silk hat *plush* imported directly from Messrs Barth, Massing & Plichon of Paris, he declared that the attempted assassination of the Emperor of France had not disturbed his supplies.[180] Parsley and his son, also Daniel, were, without doubt, the leading publicists among the hatters. There was 'some disappointment' that it was young Daniel, not his sixty-five-year-old father, who in 1888 settled a wager with a 'daring, thrilling and remarkably exciting feat' by entering a 'den of Monster African Lions [which] will assuredly cause the greatest sensation ever known in this city'. In heavy rain, Parsley followed Madame Salva, the Sable African Lion Huntress, into the den. There were 'not a few who involuntarily turned away their heads ... silence fell every time [Parsley] went near the wild animals, but excited cheering as he came away ... Parsley removed his bowler and bowed, and then left the cage'. Someone suggested the lions had been previously gorged; another responded with the 'cruel pun that the wild beasts might still like their meat with a little parsley'.[181]

Before 1800, four parishes dominated retail hatting: Christ Church, St James, SS Philip and Jacob (SS P&J), and St Stephen, together contributed 60% of the 256 records for this period. Christ Church was at the very heart of the city, St Stephen off the commercial centre on the River Frome 'Key', both where

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[179] *BM*, 6/6/1857; 20/2&3/1858. Parsley's 1857 principal offering was 'consolidated India rubber banded hats'.
[180] *BM*, 20/2/1858. The attempted assassination of Napoleon III, Emperor of the French, was by Felice Orsini, an Italian revolutionary.
[181] *BM*, 12&13/11/1888.

outlets would be expected; St James was to the north just outside the city gate. After 1800, many records emphasise cross-city retail outlets with the central Christ Church, St James, and St Paul containing about 10% each. However, SS Philip and Jacob with its outer parish, SS P&J (O), contributed 30% (Castle Precincts 20%).[182] The heavy influence of hatting in this one small area shows that premises within the Precincts were predominantly for wholesale and finishing and had been increasingly so since the beginning of the eighteenth century.[183]

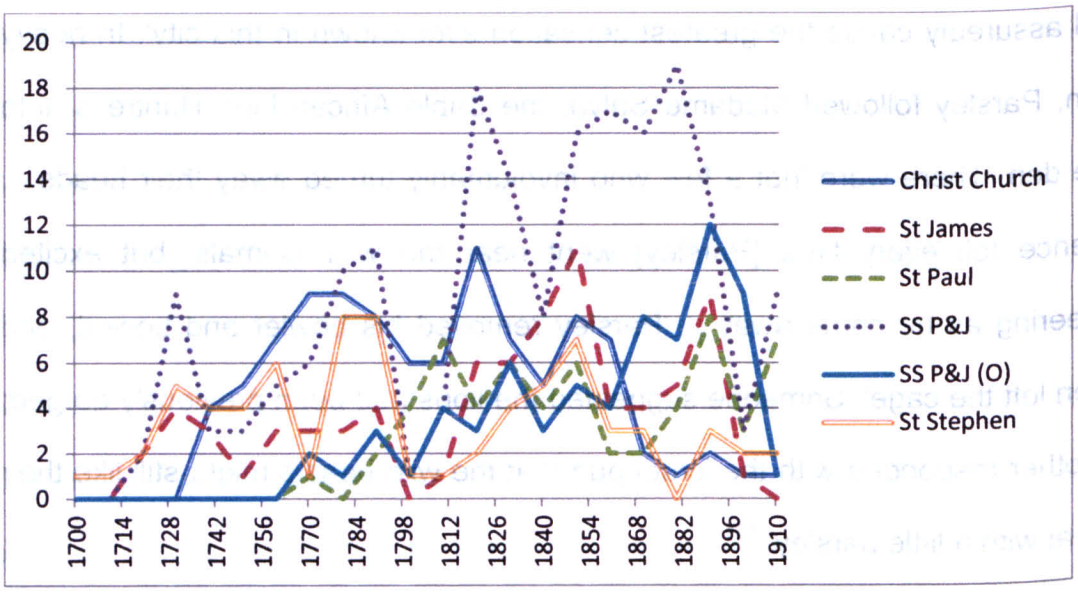

Figure 48: Hatting premises by Bristol parish, 1700-1910.

Castle Precincts comprised two main streets adjacent to the north shore of what is now the floating harbour, Castle Green and Castle Street, the latter grounded by stone from the castle walls. They were joined by two narrow

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[182] By coincidence, both saints were patrons of the feltmaker's trade. However, the parish was founded before 1174 and predates the arrival of the felt industry in England (Andrew Foyle, *Bristol*, Pevsner Architectural Guides, Yale University Press 2004), p. 107.

[183] Leases of plots in the Castle Precincts, mainly 1656-1678, give only one feltmaker, Elizabeth Horwood in 1657 (Dr Williams's Library, London, *Lyon Turner manuscript 89-15/2*, using data extracted from BRO, *Bargain Books of the Mayor, Burgesses and Comonalty*).

lanes, Tower Street in the south, once a Castle Green extension, and Cock and Bottle Lane in the centre, and in the north by Peter Street, a main thoroughfare with Wine Street to Merchant Street and the hatting villages. The old Castle Ditch, which later became Lower Castle Street, was at the south end of Castle Street. In the 215 years to 1915, this area was home to at least 187 hatting businesses (256 with the outer parish), some of them large employers with considerable establishments.[184]

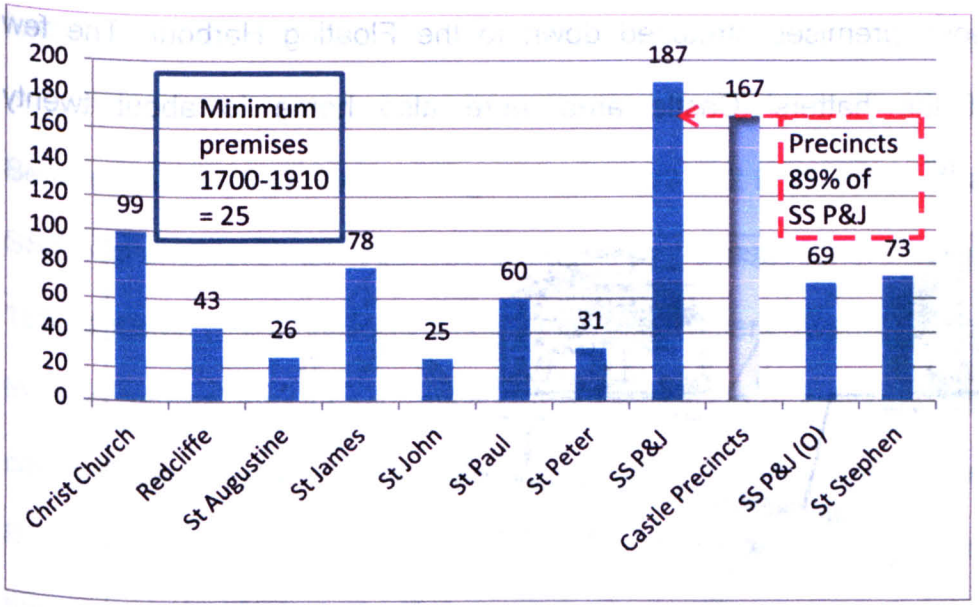

Figure 49: Hatting concentration in Bristol parishes, 1700-1915.

It seems unlikely that any other industrial area of the city ever saw such a concentration, especially over such a long period.[185] Many of the premises were identified with street numbers and these can be precisely placed on the

[184] For instance, Joseph Dando, Charles Garlick & Sons, Thomas Gibson & Co, T Glass & Co, William Palser, Charles Payne, John Protheroe, G W Skinner & Co, Smith & Marsh, Stopford & Co, Charles Whittuck, and Yeoman, Serle.

[185] Appendix 35: *Hatting establishments, Castle area, 1722-1915.* This list is undoubtedly an underestimation and is skewed towards the nineteenth century where the better records exist.

streets using the large-scale Goad insurance maps of the 1890s-1930s.[186] Some of the properties housed many businesses, whether as co-habitants or successors over time through partnership, purchase, or opportunity. One example of many is 76-77 Castle Street which held, in turn, six companies from 1811-1915. The size of some of the Castle Precincts firms is shown by Joseph Dando & Co, 1821-1852, at 9-10 Castle Green; Smith & Marsh, 1870-1878, 39-40 Castle Green, and George Skinner, 1875-1880, at 69 Castle Street whose premises stretched down to the Floating Harbour. The few streets of the hatters' Castle area were also home to about twenty alehouses.[187]

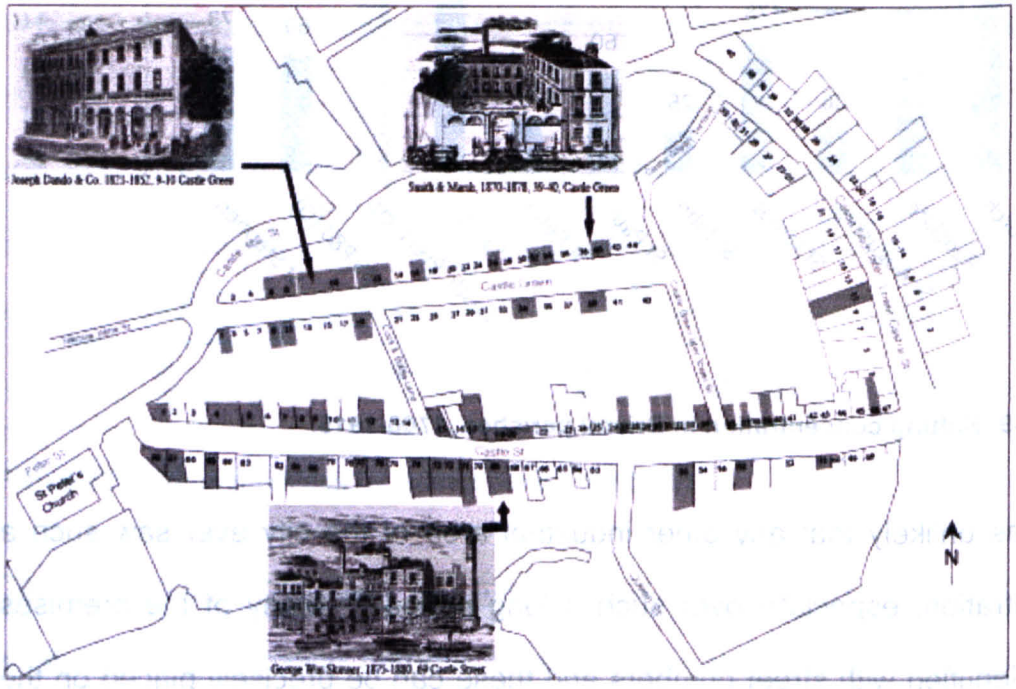

Figure 50: Three of the larger companies in Castle Precincts, 1821-1878, with greyed hatting premises, 1722-1911.[188]

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[186] C E Goad insurance plans (BRO, 43885/1, 40904/1; also BL, 145.b.9.(2)).
[187] Patrick McGrath and Mary E Williams, *Bristol Inns and Alehouses in the Mid-Eighteenth Century* (City of Bristol 1979).
[188] Pictures found in advertisements (*HG*, 1877-1878) and the Blaise Castle Museum, Braikenridge Collection business cards.

The lack of recognition of Bristol's hatting industry by its museums and historians may be, in part, due to this Castle area concentration. The Precincts was flattened in *Luftwaffe* raids on the city docks, particularly on 24 November 1940. Many of the almost 1,400 dead and injured were evening 'window-shopping promenaders' in Castle Street. 'I looked [towards] Castle Street and saw the most amazing spectacle ... I was looking at a whole city burning.'[189] The bombing eradicated the architectural remnants of the city's hatting industry; its cellars and rubble now lie below Castle Park.[190]

Between 1773-1810, there is a good run of 13,912 baptismal records for the SS Philip and Jacob parish which show fathers' occupations.[191] Among these, 166 baptisms (1.2%) were to a combination of hatters, twenty feltmakers, and thirteen hat-makers, thus identifying the main group of craftsman living in the city and servicing the Castle area. The men's homes concentrated around Broad Weir and the old Castle walls and on the roads leading north-east from the city to Fishponds, via Redcross Street and Wade Street; and to Kingswood, via Old Market Street, West Street and Lawrence Hill; and through both to the feltmaking villages. By far the greatest cluster (43.7%) was about Wade Street and its crossroads of Great and Little Anne and George Streets near to the 'new prison', a notorious slum. The definition of *hatter* here

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[189] Foyle, *Bristol*, p. 170.

[190] Many of the business properties in the Castle area had independent cellars, often three levels deep. Some of these cellars were found during reconstruction in the 1960s when top levels were filled with rubble from the car parks which had been introduced there after the war. Many of the cellars went undiscovered or unfilled (Private conversation with one architect involved with the site in the 1960s, 2011).

[191] 8/1773-9/1810, 'Index and Transcripts 1754-1812', *Bristol Diocese Baptismal Registers*, Vols. 8-10 (B&AFHS cd 2006).

is unclear: it could either signify a sole trader retailing from home or a person employed in a hatting establishment, engaged principally in hat finishing rather than feltmaking. There were eighty-three father hatters and it is likely that seventy-two of them were employed as finishers: none of their names occurs elsewhere in all of the discovered Bristol trader records and their homes were cramped, artisan dwellings. Further, twelve of them had names consistently associated with the feltmaker villages and not with Bristol, suggesting movement into the city for work.[192] Most importantly, these eighty-three men would not have provided sufficient manpower to cover the over 350 men claimed as employed by the known hat manufactories and warehouses in SS Philip & Jacob and this, in turn, suggests outlying manufactories.[193]

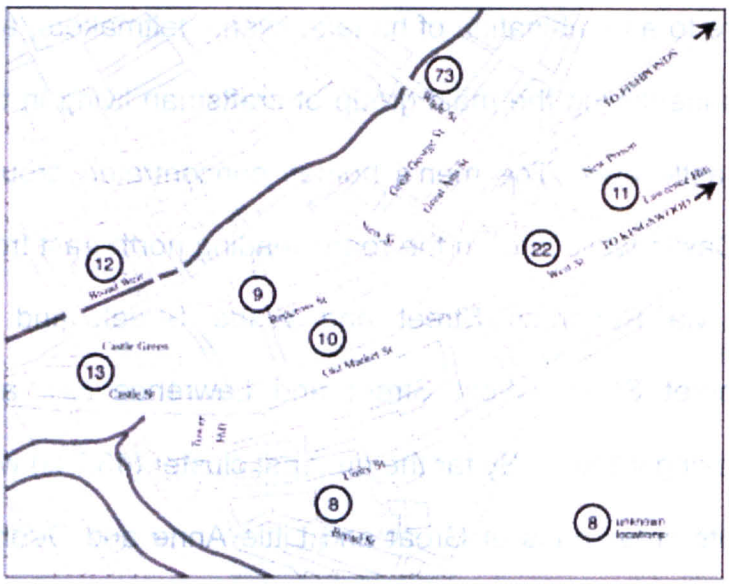

Figure 51: Hatter baptisms in SS Phillip and Jacob, 1773-1810.

[192] For instance: Cordy, Hale, Holder, Frampton Cotterell; Fudge, Kethro, Short, Oldland Common; Maggs, Scudamore, Skidmore, Winterbourne.
[193] Collected from *BM*, 1800-1820.

By the 1840-1850s, the few factory workers left living in the slum courts and terraces of the Castle area were not local men, but migrant hatters from Cork, Cornwall, London, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne. There were a few trimmers, usually daughters of men in other trades, and the occasional ancillary worker like hat box makers and turners producing hat blocks.[194]

As Bristol's hat masters, like most successful businessmen, matured in their trade they sought to use excess capital for less arduous personal gain, and spare time for civic or political improvement that would help their business, directly or indirectly. Sometimes the two objectives overlapped. This was the era of improved transportation: railways, docks (but with hatters generally upset by the taxation required), toll roads, bridges, even bicycles, all received the trades' attention.

The Ransford family was typical of the successful. The partners held shares in the Kennet & Avon Canal, and, in Bristol, in the Commercial Rooms, Docks, Water Works and Zoological Gardens.[195] In Clevedon, they were property developers and led construction of the local pier. There were further investments in brewing, baking and, alongside the Wills tobacco company founders, insurance. In 1819, Thomas Ransford was one of five directors delegated by the Bristol Dock Company to lease a toll gate at Totterdown to raise money for 'improving and making more commodious the port and

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[194] For instance, hat block maker Henry Blackburn, a turner, 4 Lower Castle Street; and hat-box makers Charles T Evans, Barr St; R Lovell, Passage St; Joseph Smart, 2 Lower Castle Street (1841-1861 censuses; Webster's 1865 Directory of Bristol and Glamorgan).

[195] *The Morning Chronicle*, 12/5/1845.

harbour of Bristol'.[196] John Carver's estate of £200,000 was based mainly on railway stock.[197] Nathaniel Dando had extensive railway involvement as a director of the Lincolnshire and Eastern Counties Railway and, from that position, was appointed in 1845 to provisional committees of the Lincolnshire, the North Metropolitan Junction Railway, and the South London Railway Companies.[198] Charles Dando was a director of the Bristol and Exeter Railway.[199] Both Joseph and Charles Dando were early Great Western Railway (GWR) shareholders.[200] They joined other leading men of Bristol to complain that the route chosen by the new GWR through Wiltshire, Somerset and Dorset would not deliver the promised business connections for Bristol with its commercial hinterland.[201] In 1883, Daniel Parsley was among many hundreds calling for a public meeting in support of the Bristol and London and South Western (Junction) Railway Bill, which would extend that railway to Bristol with a new station between the Drawbridge and Stone Bridge (a short

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[196] BRO, BCC/D/PBA/Corp/E/3/21/d, 25/3/1819.

[197] Bristol and Exeter Railway stock, £2,600; Taff Vale Railway stock, £6,973; Midland Railway stock, worth £3,354; £525 Bristol and Exeter Railway 4% stock; fifteen £15 shares, Stockton and Darlington Railway; nine shares, Llynvi Valley Railway; thirteen £15 shares, Swansea Vale Railway; nine £25 shares, Bristol and South Wales Union Railway; four £50 shares, Aberdare Railway, worth £436; £50 preference stock, Bristol Water Works Company; £200 secured on mortgage of business premises, worth £1,000; one-fifth of one-seventh of the Castle Green warehouses, and after his wife's death, reversion of one fifth of £310 Taff Vale Railway stock; twenty-three £30 shares, Monmouthshire Railway and Canal; £1,700 Bristol and Exeter Railway stock; £1,533 Taff Vale Railway stock, worth £2,452; £951 3s 10d per cent of Shrewsbury and Birmingham Railway guaranteed stock; share in freehold residence at 6 Dean Street and household effects, worth £189 17s 6d (*LG*, 9/2/1864).

[198] *BM*, 4, 14, 22/10/1845.

[199] *The Times*, 24/10/1845.

[200] The GWR shareholder registers contain twenty-four records of share transactions by the Dando family: nine for Charles from 1868-1889; Joseph, three, 1860-1868; Edward, one, 1854. They mostly concern arrangements for stock, held singly or jointly, on death or marriage. The final transaction is in 1906 for an Ann Dando of Gloucestershire (viewed *www.sog.org.uk*, accessed 2008).

[201] *BM*, 9/11/1844.

walk from his shop).[202] A few years later, Daniel, joined another large group, this time calling for a fixed bridge to replace the Drawbridge.[203]

All the leading hatters signed public petitions for improvements in city and business. Samuel Betty supported rejection of the Bristol Port & Docks Commission bill which sought to include St George's in the dock rate area and John Cory played a leading part in the abandonment of the 'objectionable' Docks Scheme at Avonmouth.[204] Two Ransfords were in a group of Bristol merchants and traders in 1822 expressing dismay at an impending Insolvent Debtors' Act.[205]

A man of views, John Cory wrote more than 200 letters over twenty-five years to local and London papers on a 'variety of social, political and scientific subjects; contributed to cycling and kindred journals, learnt to ride a bicycle in 1870 and rode every day'.[206] He was one of the Bristol *Liberal Four Hundred* who declared against the Gladstone Home Rule [for Ireland] policy in 1886. An Overseer of the Poor in 1872, he continued his membership of the Board of Guardians for over thirty years. In 1872 he became honorary secretary of the *Bristol Anti-Income Tax Association*. But it was cycling that was probably nearest to John Cory's heart, particularly ladies' dress while cycling. A strong

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[202]
[203] *BM*, 24/1/1883.
[204] *BM*, 24/1/1890.
[205] *BM*, 17/2/1882; TNA, PYB 1/909.
[206] *BM*, 4/11/1822.
BM, 2/3/1872.

supporter of the *League for Rational Dress for Lady Cyclists*, he was 'often seen riding out with ladies so attired'.[207]

Many of Bristol's hatting shopkeepers decided to take on both public opinion and conservative competitors in 1866. Closing at eight in the evening on Mondays ruffled the traditionalists and left bad feeling in the hatting community.[208] This could be compared with this position in 1700 when the successful hatter 'worked with admirable energy'; the business day began at 5 or 6 am, and continued till 6 pm, then came supper, an hour or so at the tavern, and then bed. Beer-houses shut at 9 pm in the winter.[209] In 1888, the same 'Early Hours' movement, brought in four o'clock closing on Saturday afternoons.[210]

With fortunes secured, and trusted staff in place, the thoughts of Bristol's successful hatters turned to religion; increased charitable involvement; suitable placement of their children, the young men in business and the daughters in marriage; and the acquisition of appropriate new homes. The hat manufacturers were mostly non-conformist, Quakers, Baptists and Methodists, and several were prominent Lodge members.[211] The hatters stood out in the Bristol newspapers for their charitable works, both privately

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[207] *Bristol Magpie*, undated.
[208] *BM*, 10/3/1866. Appendix 36: *Hatters' early closing movement, 1866.*
[209] James, 'Bristol Society', p. 233.
[210] *BM*, 17/10/1888.
[211] Discussed in Chapter 10: *Prayer, 1739-1900.*

and as members of the Colston Societies.[212] Grassby found that all businessmen 'recognized an obligation to advance and protect their children and to set them up for life'. Most wanted at least one of their sons to follow in their occupation, and through personally-managed apprenticeships, many Bristol hatters secured this. Daughters also married into the business community, but were 'distributed among different professions'.[213] 'Love, status, and money were not antagonistic ends and reason and interest as well as emotion should govern the choice of partners.'[214]

'The surge of building after 1660 filled up the green areas of the city; and the wealthy were thereafter increasingly catered for by squares and other areas with gardens, whilst the poor were gradually confined to the poorer suburbs'.[215] From 1700, the rich began to buy houses on the outskirts of Bristol. Thomas Ransford's home was a large and elegant dwelling house at Stapleton built to his own specifications 'with every regard to durability and ornament'. The rear garden sloped to the River Frome with a 'most picturesque and enchanting' view from the conservatory and terrace.[216] As well as his 'bold and attractive shop' at Clare Street, Daniel Parsley bequeathed Grove House in Southwell Street and Rock Cottage, Stapleton Road.[217] Ashley was a popular area for new hat manufacturer houses. Joseph

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[212] *BM*, 15/11/1819, 3/4/1888.
[213] Grassby, *Kinship*, p. 385.
[214] Grassby, *Kinship*, p. 47.
[215] Barry, 'Popular Culture', pp. 79-80.
[216] Janet and Derek Fisher, Alan Freke and Roger Anderson, *Bygone Bristol, Frenchay and Stapleton*, carries a postcard dated 1930 of Frome Lodge and this is likely the building.
[217] *BM*, 20/9, 4/10/1890; 4/4, 25/4/1891.

Dando moved to 'a most beautiful mansion on Ashley Down'.[218] Joel Gardiner senior's home was in Ashley Place.[219] George Howes lived at The Elms, Ashley Hill, and brother Gilbert at The Lawns, Ashley Road.[220]

The information gathered on these successful men (from thirty-eight reconstructed histories of Bristol hat firms) demonstrate the evolving complexities of managing growing family-run organisations, particularly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The combined information is not unique to Bristol's hat industry, or to the industry itself. The hat manufacturers do, however, provide a summary of aspirations in their growth from sole traders to risk-taking entrepreneurs, established businessmen, and dynasty creators. This commercial Maslovian hierarchy is common currency in much current business literature and reflects, for instance, the anticipated maturing of a principal's interests as day-to-day control is relinquished.[221]

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[218] 'Matters and Things in Europe', *The Methodist Quarterly Review*, 1847, Vol. XXIX, New York, October edition, p. 610. *BM*, 24/1/1852.
[219] Application for listed building status, *Ashley Grange Residents' Association*.
[220] BRO, 38609/24.
[221] A H Maslow, 'A Theory of Human Motivation', *Psychological Review*, Vol. 50, No. 4, 1943, pp. 370-96. Sidney Pollard, *The Genesis of Modern Management* (Harmondsworth, Penguin 1968).

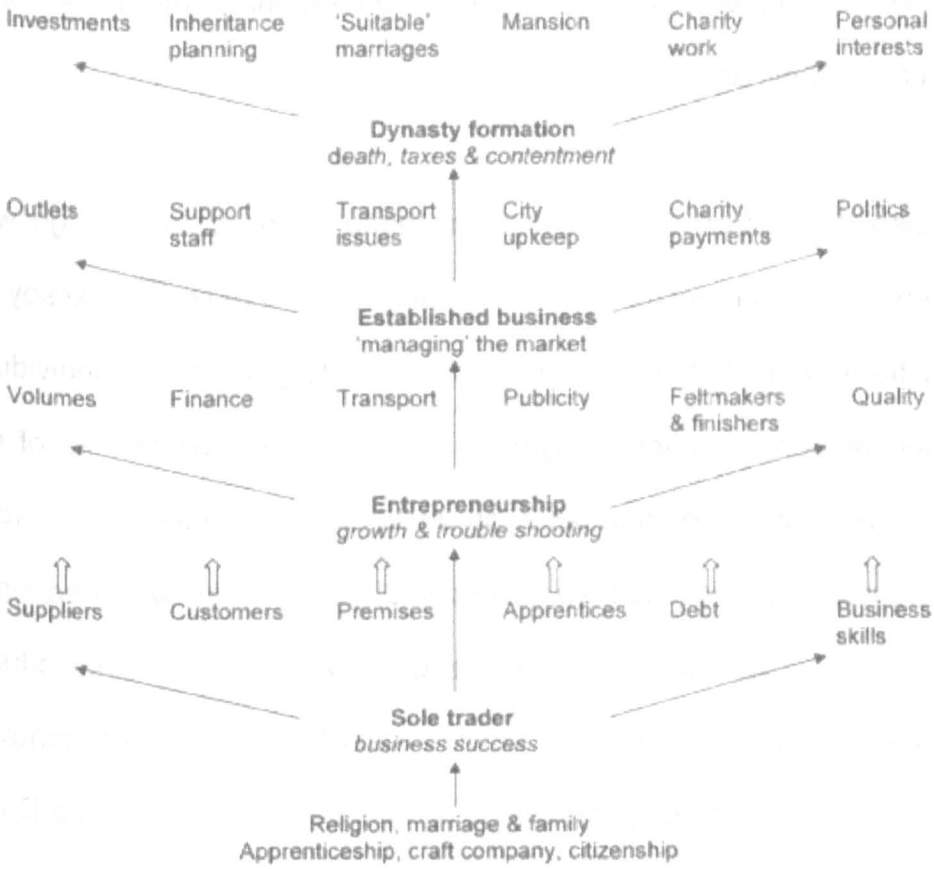

Figure 52: Hierarchical focus of the hat master, 1700-1830.

As the time to hand over the successful enterprise to family or chosen partner became close, the records show an emphasis on investment and enjoyment of wealth.[222] The reach of many of these businesses was, however, limited. A lack of competent male heirs at the right stage of development meant 'most firms could not be based exclusively on the nuclear family'. The extended family was then investigated for new manpower or additional finance.[223] Bristol's hatters also extended their influence and skills by combining with like firms in short-term, but intense, partnerships in a succession of arrangements

[222] Daniel Defoe, *Conjugal Lewdness or matrimonial whoredom: A treatise concerning the use and abuse of the marriage bed* (1727, reprint Menston, Yorkshire, Scolar Press 1970), iii, pp. 62-69. Grassby, *Business*, p. 305.
[223] Grassby, *Kinship*, p. 309.

between two or three persons.[224] These partnerships often had their foundations in historic apprentice relationships.

There is also the darker side of the coin: matters did not always go well. Hatters were always preoccupied with the 'problem of credit'.[225] Grassby felt that family firms 'were better positioned to borrow long term than individuals because the responsibility for repayment did not depend on the life of one person'.[226] Credit was 'given and taken on trust in the expectation that it would be paid', but essentially it was an unsecured loan. Money was needed to seize opportunities especially because hatting was an entrepreneurial industry where an increasing susceptibility to fashion meant a 'propensity to innovate was vital'.[227] Debt and bankruptcy were common companions with the Bristol hatters: debt as they watched retailers they had supplied fail; bankruptcy as they over-reached themselves or ran for cover.[228] Grassby saw the worst risk in the seventeenth century as the bankruptcy and misfortunes of third parties. It was 'impossible to ascertain with complete certainty the true financial position of any client and it was extremely difficult and time-consuming to

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[224] Grassby, *Kinship*, p. 269.
[225] Julian Hoppit, *Risk and Failure in English Business 1700-1800* (CUP 1987), p. 178.
[226] Grassby, *Kinship*, p. 309.
[227] Hoppit, *Risk and Failure*, p. 179. Grassby, *Business*, p. 172.
[228] There was a steady rise in seventeenth–century debt in Bristol, increasingly dealt with after 1630 by the Mayor's Court rather than the Tolzey. From a peak around the civil wars there is then a steady decline into the eighteenth century in the use of these courts to deal with debt. In Bristol, litigation was higher than one suit per household a year in the late sixteenth-century; 'short-term changes in foods prices or in rates of mortality seem to have been engulfed by the numbers of suits generated by the normal course of business' (Craig Muldrew, *The Economy of Obligation: The Culture of Credit and Social Relations in Early Modern England*, Basingstoke, Macmillan 1998), pp. 218-242.

recover debts ... and no real protection against genuine failure'.[229] The textile trades, including the hatters, were the eighteenth century's dominant creditors especially with linen dealers, mercers and haberdashers, many of whom included hats among their wares.[230] Bristol's hat wholesalers sold goods on credit to country retailers and their exposure could be extensive.[231] Gloucestershire, which included Bristol, was second (although distant) to London, with 7.3% of the total of eighteenth-century creditors.[232] Hoppit speculated this may have been influenced by the two cities' position as leading merchant exporters. Bristol's newspapers, and the *London Gazette*, particularly in the nineteenth century, provide many examples of third-party dependency, and show that it was the hatter who often took control of the country mercer's or haberdasher's affairs.[233]

An interesting view of debt is in the Company's reaction to the case of their three-time master, John Eames. Eames, haberdasher of hats and brewer, was imprisoned with John Coram, a Bristol ironmonger, in 1764.[234] Eames and Coram gave a bond of '£3,000 upwards' for tobacco. The men were

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[229] Grassby, *Business*, pp. 92-93.
[230] Willan, *Shopkeeper*, throughout.
[231] Hoppit, *Risk and Failure*, p. 149. For example, letters (1393) to Richard Aspinwall, merchant, Liverpool, 6/10/1716 and (1452) to Anthony Smith, shopkeeper, Egremont, 9/11/1716 (S D Smith, edited, *An Exact and Industrious Tradesman, The Letter Book of Joseph Symson of Kendal 1711-1720*, The British Academy, OUP 2002), pp. 397, 434.
[232] Hoppit, *Risk and Failure*, pp. 149-150.
[233] Davies, Jones & Co, with a Helston hatmaker (Cornwall Record Office, 1800, GR/650); Charles Dando with a Tredegar draper (*LG*, 11/7/1826); Joseph Dando, Fishguard draper (*LG*, 29/6/1827); Joseph Dando, Bristol woollen draper and silk mercer (*BM*, 14/3/1837); Henry Carver, Bristol hatter (*LG*, 9/4/1861); Thomas Glass, Devonport hatter (*LG*, 3/2/1863); Henry Carver, Dorset draper and grocer (*LG*, 6/11/1863); Henry Carver, Worcester hat and cap manufacturer (*LG*, 19/1/1864); and Charles Garlick, Bristol draper (*LG*, 3/3/1871).
[234] *LG*, 21/2/1764, 5/3/1765.

declared bankrupt.[235] A subscription was 'set on foot by the inhabitants of the city in order to relieve the [men] from such void'. The Company empowered feltmaker Timothy Dowell to subscribe £100 of their capital stock 'in order to release them from such said Bond'. As the £100 was 'now out at interest on the Bond of John Dowell and will not be paid until the next accounts day', hatters Timothy Dowell, Charles Whittuck and Thomas Owen offered an immediate loan of the £100.[236] Fifteen months later, Eames was still in goal. The Company met again in March 1764 to agree that John Dowell should 'pay into the hands of Mr Hanbury' £100 to be applied towards clearing Eames's debt and that the 'receipt shall be sufficient to discharge the Bond in Timothy Powell's hands'.[237]

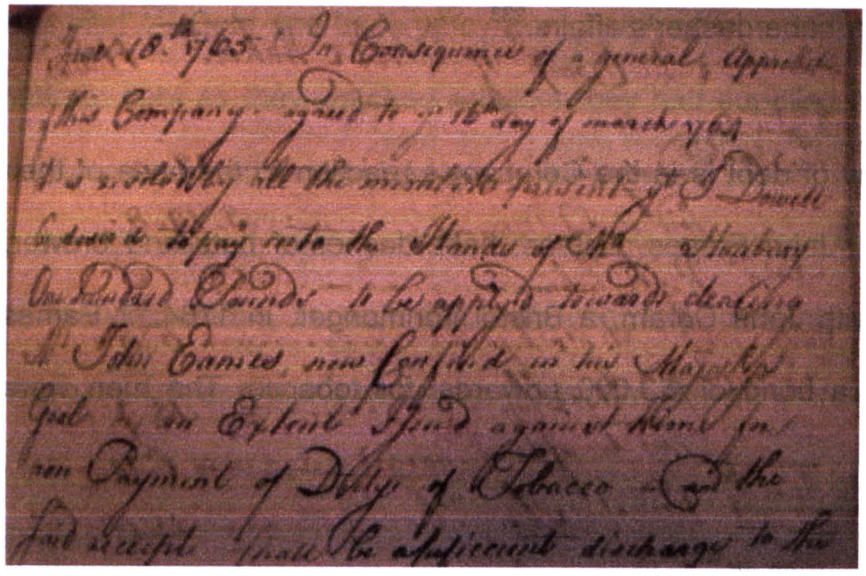

Figure 53: John Eames: 'confined in His Majesty's Gaol', 1765.

Defoe had no time for tradesmen who borrowed money on interest and described it as 'like a man going into a house infected with the plague; it is not

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[235] *LG*, 21/2/1764, 5/3/1765.
[236] 16/3/1764 (BRO, 08156/2), p. 272.
[237] 10/6/1765 (BRO, 08156/2), p. 276.

only likely that he may be infected and die, but next to a miracle if he escapes'.[238] He also despaired of a relaxation in the bankruptcy laws as 'men make so little of breaking ... A commission of bankrupt is so familiar a thing, that the debtor oftentimes causes it to be taken out in his favour'.[239] Julian Hoppit saw eighteenth century bankruptcy as the 'tip of the iceberg of insolvency as failure ... If the numbers and patterns of bankruptcy can be gauged other sorts of failure are largely lost from view'.[240]

Eighteenth-century analyses of bankruptcies, a 'growth industry', show those of haberdashers and hatters increasing by 190% against a 23% rise by shops in general.[241] With few exceptions Bristol conformed to London patterns and was also very similar to Norwich. Bristol's bankruptcy rate for haberdashers, hatters, etc, was 10.7% of a total of 95 in 1783 and 8.9% of 321 in 1822-1823. There was steep growth in bankruptcy in England between 1760-1800 with textiles and clothes businesses always leading at about 25% of the total, about double the rate of the next specialist trade.[242] There was significant unemployment in the hatting industry nationally in the 1760s brought about principally by overseas competition. While there is no evidence, apart from the rise in local bankruptcy around 1790 to connect this downturn with Bristol, it does seem to be a telling conjunction.[243] There are only low levels of Bristol

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[238] Defoe, *Tradesman*, p. vii.
[239] Defoe, *Tradesman*, p. 46.
[240] Hoppit, *Risk and Failure*, p. 18.
[241] Analysis in *Gentleman's Magazine* of 586 bankruptcies at three points between 1748 and 1768 (Muis, *Shops*), pp. 66-67.
[242] Hoppit, *Risk and Failure*, pp. 45, 57, 62, 75, 176.
[243] Appendix 37: *Unemployment and overseas lures, 1764-1769.*

Green premises. The brothers were not apprenticed to the trade; all their money was quickly lost.[248] A scion of the great firm of Ransford, Thomas, was bankrupted in 1833 and left for auction a substantial Frampton Cotterell manufactory, his elegant home in Stapleton, and a 65-acre farm and brewery estate in Somerset.[249] His son, Thomas Gay, was a partner in the nationally-recognised firm of Higgs and Ransford, based in Manchester, which collapsed in 1837.[250] The problem of easy credit and culpable insolvency remained a trade issue into the twentieth century and was regularly discussed.[251]

The Company had a small, but important, role in offsetting trade hardship. William Risum, or Risom, a Bristol haberdasher, left the masters £6 in his will of 1644 as a 'free gift'.[252] This generosity provided the foundation of a small charitable fund that was applied for over 200 years to less fortunate members, their wives and children.[253] Joel Gardiner finding that *Ryson's Gift* had not been applied for since 1842 explained that he 'had met with many difficulties and his business not producing equal to the requirements of his large family'. The next year's accounts show the sale of £172 15s 11d in 3% consols entire.[254] After further unnamed gift payments, £34 1s 9d was left. In 1858, Gardiner and John Dowell, descendants of perhaps the city's two leading

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[248] 1871 census. LG, 9/2/1864.
[249] *BM*, 20/4, 4/5, 15/6, 16/11 (all 1833), 26/7, 6/11 (1834); BRO, 14182(HB)/PL/1; 5/11/1841 (Somerset Record Office, D/D/Rt418).
[250] *The Times*, 11/2/1837.
[251] Appendix 39: *Hatters' extended credit and culpable insolvency, 1880.*
[252] BRO, 08156/1, p. 256.
[253] Appendix 21: *Bristol feltmakers and haberdashers, 1595-1865.*
[254] 1836-1863 (BRO, 08156/2), pp. 445-446.

hatter bankrupts in the found records in the eighteenth century generally while the more complete records of the nineteenth century show a steady decrease after 1840, more likely reflecting the broad decline in the felt hat industry than any improvement in hatter business practice.[244]

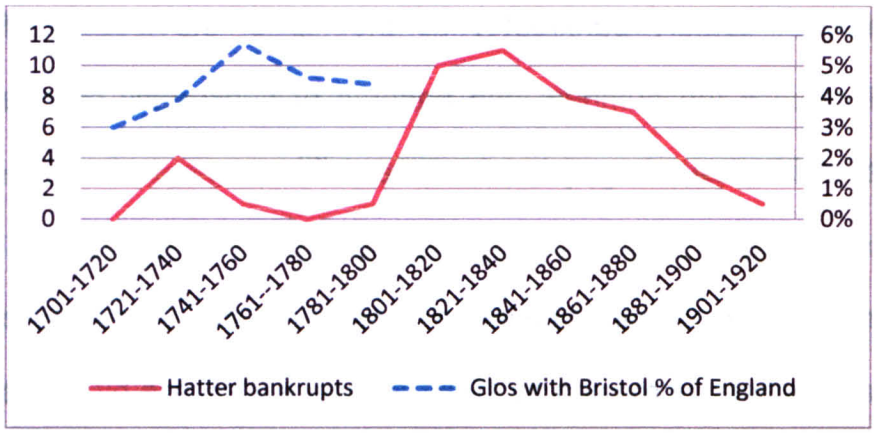

Figure 54: Hatter bankruptcy in Bristol, 1701-1920.[245]

Many of the bankrupt hatters were first generation in the trade, but a few were descended from the great city firms and provide examples of 'riches-to-rags in two or three generations'. John Withers, hat manufacturer of Castle Street, was busy raising petitions of appeal against bankruptcy conviction in 1819.[246] In 1824, Joseph Carver married into the Dando family and received a £500 marriage portion with a £2,000 provision. Within two years he was bankrupt and became his father-in-law's commercial traveller.[247] By 1871, Joseph's first son, Henry, claimed over one hundred employees in his Bristol hat business; his two younger brothers set up as co-partner hatmakers in London using their share of a £20,000 inheritance built from railway stocks and the firm's Castle

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[244] Appendix 38: *Bristol hatter bankrupts, 1722-1910.*
[245] The Gloucestershire figures are from Hoppit, *Risk and Failure*, p. 184.
[246] BRO, JQS/P/400; *BM*, 2/12, 13/12/1819; Matthew's Trade Directory, 1834.
[247] 24/7/1824, St James (BRO, 08025/32). *LG*, 29/4/1826, 20/6/1826. Carver later took over the business.

hatting families, were 'the only members of this society' and shared the remaining money. This is the last entry in the minute book.[255]

Third party collapse maintained its prominent position among the domestic reasons for failure of Bristol hat businesses into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This was not only by number, but also through reach across the trade. John Cave, a hatter in Tetbury in 1814, left a considerable list of creditors including many of the major Bristol hatters of that time: Dando, Dowell, Edwards and Gardner, as well as other hatting firms from Bath and London.[256] Pilferage, suggested as important in the sixteenth century by Grassby, certainly continued, but cumulatively it seems a minor affair by the limited goods stolen in each recorded case.[257]

Fire is the most serious missing event, especially when the business was uninsured. Dowell's fire in 1820 in Wine Street 'threatened destruction to the whole neighbourhood' as it was fed by the surrounding timber houses. Water was slow to arrive for the first hour. The next day the firm appealed for information 'as to any property that was removed during the fire'.[258] The same year, Higgs and Ransford had an 'alarming fire' at their Old Market Street premises. A tin canister containing £300 was too hot to handle. When opened,

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[255] BRO, 08156/2, pp. 445-446.
[256] *LG*, 21/5/1814.
[257] Grassby, *Business*, pp. 92-93. Criminal theft cases in Bristol: Ricketts & Ewer, 1796 (BRO, JQS/P/143); *BM*: Ransford, 26/8/1822; Dando, 18/8/1836, fraud; Withers, 12&19/8/1837; Taylor, 12/1/1850; Pullen, 10/4/1858; Daniell, 27/10/1860; Pullen, 13/5/1865; Pullen, 19/3/1870; Higgs, 29/6/1872; Daniell, 11&18/2/1882; Pullen, 6/7/1887; Higgs, 26/5/1888.
[258] *BM*, 13/3/1820.

the bill roll was found with 'just one corner burned off'.[259] Payne had two fires in 1845 and 1846 on Castle Green. For the first the property was uninsured, but cover was arranged with Sun Fire by the second. The rear buildings were destroyed at four in the morning and the two large nearby hat factories of Dando and Gibson were threatened.[260] Glass's 'very capacious' premises running from Castle Street to the river were completely gutted in 1864 and the 'most valuable part of the perfected stock' was lost.[261] In 1885, Bettey Brothers in Victoria Street lost their premises and stock as water was turned off 'as usual' on Tuesday to 'admit of repairs and alterations to neighbourhood service pipes'. Three auctions were held, the last without reserve, for fire and water damaged stock.[262] Howes's fire in 1890 was put out by the workers using buckets and when the local brigade arrived 'there was little left to do'.[263]

Problems with hatter labour and the development of trade unions are described in depth later.[264] Among regular employment issues, city newspapers describe a fight at Dando's premises in Castle Green; an apprentice's assault on Withers and, separately, another of his boys absconding; an attempted suicide with scissors at Dando's; an apprentice's successful case for unpaid wages against Payne while employed at Castle Green; another apprentice paid off cheaply to the anger of his father as Payne sought to settle with creditors; suicide with a knife after dismissal following an

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[259] *BM*, 30/9/1820.
[260] *BM*, 25/7/1846.
[261] *BM*, 4/5/1861.
[262] *BM*, 2, 5, 9/12/1885.
[263] *BM*, 2, 5, 9/12/1885.
[264] Chapter 8: *Combination, 1700-1835.*

altercation at Pullen's Stapleton Road manufactory; and, also at Pullen's, death from a fall after an epileptic fit at work.[265] In contrast, a firm like Dando, Heaven regularly placed advertisements to recognise the death of respected employees.[266]

Conclusions

There was an element of the *parvenu* about the feltmakers. The retailers dealt intimately with the greatest heads in the city, presumably working these relationships to their advantage, and yet their Company minute book often shows glimpses of an unruly group of traders and craftsmen grasping at formal ceremonies and aping their guild predecessors. The enjoyment of good food and plentiful drink in like-minded company is evident. Overall, there is a sense of lower-wage craftsmen and traders having 'arrived'.

In the heady days of the industry's establishment in the sixteenth century, there was an early and dynamic upward mobility. Entry into the hat business at the lower levels as a felt hood maker or a small retailer required relatively little fixed capital. The market was all around and there was a ready credit structure. When combined with skill, appropriate premises and 'unrelenting

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[265] *BM*: Dando, 8/7/1837; Withers, 16/3/1839; Withers, 16/11/1844; Dando, 24/3/1849; Payne, 5/7/1851; Payne, 10/3/1855; Pullen, 6/7/1867; Pullen, 7/9/1892.

[266] Samuel Martin, at Calne, 'many years in confidential employ' died from the injury he received by the upsetting of the company's coach, 1827; Isaac Martin, for the last twenty-three years in confidential employ, a consistent member of the independent chapel on Castle Green, 1842; Robert Drew in Stapleton Road, aged sixty-one after a short illness, after twenty years' faithful employ with 'urbanity of manners and integrity', 1842 (BM: 23/4/1827, 22/1/1842, 5/3/1842).

and persistent motivation', a new profitable business was achievable.[267] A handful of these young men reached prominence, but few of them found the larger capital needed to become a master of significant numbers of workers or to reach the profitable markets outside of Bristol. By the middle seventeenth century, civic advancement was effectively blocked by the monopoly interests of about fifty members of the Company.

Tyro merchants in the hat trade usually started as apprentices within the wider family and 'relied on parental provision and the generosity of relations, both living and dead'.[268] Some were invited into partnership by childless masters and others married their widows or daughters. As Mr Money-Love observed, 'by becoming religious' a man 'may mend his market, perhaps get a rich wife or more and far better customers to his shop'.[269]

At the beginning, the Company provided the framework for apprentice chains and mutually-assisted endeavour among the leading clique. Few firms were islands; most were 'linked together in patterns of co-operation and affiliation'.[270] Increasingly, during the Company's slow death in the eighteenth century, the family came to take its place. Grassby's surmise that in the seventeenth century generally business was not an 'aggregate of individual entrepreneurs operating as an impersonal marker, but a network of family

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[267] Grassby, *Business*, p. 171.
[268] Grassby, *Business*, pp. 84-85.
[269] John Bunyan, *Pilgrim's Progress*, Part 1, Section VII cited in Grassby, *Business*, p. 177.
[270] G B Richardson, 'The Organisation of Industry', *The Economic Journal*, Vol. 82, No. 237, September 1972, p. 895.

partnerships' is well supported.[271] Familial capitalism is evident from first to last. The pre-eminence of the family in aiding new business, and in providing continuing financial support and manpower is indisputable. 'Management was in the hands of individual heads of households, but diffused through the extended family'.[272]

Charles Phythian-Adams declared that the craft system 'had nothing to do with industrial organisation'.[273] With the great exception of the initial monopoly, this craft Company's thoughts turned quickly from protecting their civic rights to the importance of ceremony, status and a perceived tradition. Any direct association of the Company as a step-parent to the rise of trade unionism can be disabused. From 1750, the Company had no power and almost no members. The Company died from irrelevance. Effective combination was for the workers in the countryside.[274]

Bristol's felt hat firms remained in family hands until their individual demise, or their collective failure. Bristol's hatting elite bought little land, apart from their newly-built mansions away from the city centre. Their limited capital either circulated in goods or was held in short-term credits and company stocks. The owners had a necessary and continuing interest in the regional transportation systems with their access to markets and, as users and investors, they campaigned vigorously for improvements. They mostly rented their shops and

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[271] Grassby, *Kinship*, p. 309.
[272] Grassby, *Kinship*, pp. 310-311. Also, Hoppit, *Risk and Failure*, p. 3.
[273] Phythian-Adams, *Desolation*, pp. 105-108.
[274] Discussed in Chapter 8: *Combination, 1700-1835.*

warehouses and had little fixed capital. Retailers were spread opportunistically around the city; the trade's wholesalers were bunched in a *Hatters' Quarter* in the Castle Precincts which contained many imposing premises. The location gave easy access to the feltmakers of the South Gloucestershire hatting villages. The rich hatter 'rarely left much trace of his life's work because the rewards of his success could so easily be translated into money and dissipated by his heirs'.[275]

Hoppit recognised that 'because of the lure of explaining the industrial revolution', manufacturers and industrialists rather than marketeers or distributors receive most attention.[276] This chapter has concentrated on the latter pairing. Retail activity is 'intrinsically opportunistic, pliable, servile, seeking to please, and seeks to educate the buyer in two ways – in the ways of being a good customer and those of being a good consumer'.[277] Bacon felt the 'gains of ordinary trades and vocations are honest; and furthered by two things chiefly: by diligence, and by a good name, for good and fair dealing'.[278] To a surprising degree, the records suggest Bristol's hatters had good names and dealt fairly. All in all, Bristol's hatters did a good job. The trade played an intimate part in Bristol's retail revolution which took the city from its fairs and markets, downstairs shops and manufactories to impressive regional warehouses, and then brightly-lit street shops and large-fronted department

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[275] Grassby, 'Merchant capitalism', pp. 105-107.
[276] Hoppit, *Risk and Failure*, p. 4.
[277] Cox and Dannehl, *Perceptions*, p. 11.
[278] Francis Bacon, *Of Riches, The Essays; or, Counsels Civil and Moral* (1597, reprint London, Dent, 1918), Chapter 34.

stores displaying extensive choices of clothing – including hats. From Tudor beginnings to the mechanisation of England, they sold to high and low, to rich and poor, and largely protected their regional market against powerful competition from London. Over 300 years, Bristol's hatters created one of Gloucestershire's most successful and enduring businesses in the textile and clothing trade, the under-researched industrial heart of the region.[279]

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[279] For example, in 1851 in Gloucestershire, there were just under 18,000 employees in textiles (cotton, flax, lace, leather, linen, silk, wool, worsted) and in clothing (buttons, combs, gloves, hats, hosiery and shoes), which made the combined industry second to farming with 30,000 workers (1851 census).

6 Bristol: Overseas trade, 1550-1855

Few businessmen find great wealth by concentrating their sales on their regional hinterland. Bristol's felt hatters had little choice: they were constrained, unable to compete profitably in the powerhouse of London or to match the reach into the northern cities of the manufacturing areas south of Manchester. A small number of firms with West Country family or money, like Davies, Owen, Swanton & Co; Higgs and Ransford; and Rossiter; set up in the capital, but few lasted beyond the generation. 'Big money' success needed new 'heads' in fast-growing markets, preferably with the added safeguard of an element of monopoly. For an entrepreneurial hatter in Bristol these opportunities lay in the city's long-term or developing interests in the Americas, Iberia, Ireland, and West Africa. There are immediate questions on the volume and stability of these exports for which the city's customs and shipping records can be searched. As the export patterns become clearer, can any effects on the Bristol hat trade of Britain's foreign adventures and mercantile policy be discerned? How influential were the intertwined and unpredictable powers of competition, war, legislation and tax. As the overseas business grew, what part of the commercial benefit flowed to the South Gloucestershire manufacturing villages? If Bristol's merchants relied on the villages, did the feltmakers there prove reliable?

Quantifying Bristol's hat exports is daunting. Kenneth Morgan wrote that the 'hundreds of goods and diverse weights and measures listed in the port books

and Bristol Presentments almost defy analysis.[1] Given a lifetime in which to conduct an investigation, it would be possible to use these sources for selected years to calculate the volume of Bristol's exports'.[2] The approach taken with felt hats is therefore explained in outline here and in some detail in an appendix.[3]

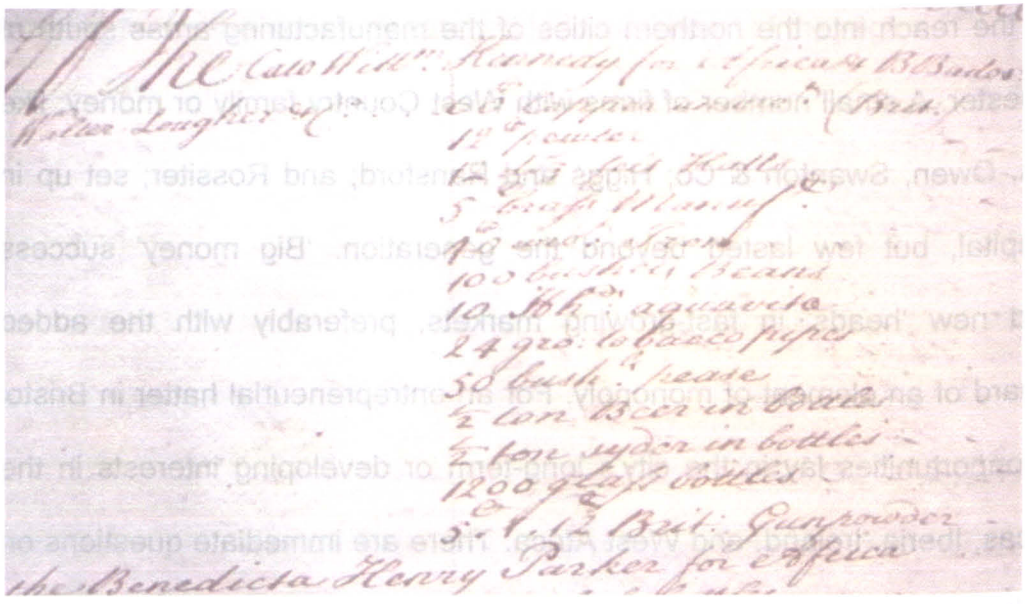

Figure 55: A typical export cargo: the *Cato*, master William Kennedy, for Africa and 'BBados', 1732, with '12 doz felt hatts' shipped by Walter Lougher & Co.[4]

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[1] TNA, E 190 series results from an Exchequer Order of 1564 requiring all customs officials in the English and Welsh ports to make entries in three different port books, the one of interest here dealt with exports and generally contained the name of the ship and its master and destination; and the names of the merchants, a description of their goods, and duties paid. *The Presentments, or Bills of Entry*, were published once or twice a week by local Customs and listed recent exports and imports. The Presentments were sold on subscription; profits going to Bristol Customs' pension fund. The main collection is at the Bristol Central Reference Library in bound volumes; further copies and some missing years are held in loose leaf form at the BRO in the series F/D/P.

[2] Kenneth Morgan, *Bristol and the Atlantic Trade in the Eighteenth Century* (CUP 1993), p. 91. For a recent, determined and fruitful investigation of the port records see Richard Stone, 'The Overseas Trade of Bristol before the Civil War', *International Journal of Maritime History*, Vol. XXIII, No. 2, December 2011.

[3] Appendix 40: *Counting the hats, 1679-1855*. A number of historians have transcribed parts of Bristol's customs accounts. For an early example see E M Carus-Wilson, *The Overseas Trade of Bristol in the Later Middle Ages* (1937, reprint London, Merlin 1967); for a recent, more detailed and investigative work, see Flavin and Jones, *Trade with Ireland*. To be fair to Morgan, while an early version of the software used for this current study was well-established in 1993, computing power has since been revolutionised.

[4] TNA, E 190/1208/4.

Hat exports from Bristol are consistently recorded in E 190 until 1789 and can be counted:

> 5 March 1687, *Swallow*, master Thomas Withington, for Barbados, three dozen felt hats, two castor hats, shipped by Charles Jones junior.[5]

The Presentments survive for 1773-1780 and 1790-1917 and provide a major problem in calculating volumes because exported dry goods, including felt hats, are most often listed by their containers and not by the number of items shipped. These containers are of two sorts, 'wet', varieties of wine and spirit casks, and 'dry', varieties of boxes and packages.[6] 'Wet' containers were the butt, puncheon, hogshead, tierce, barrel, and the cask itself.[7] There were many 'dry' containers: bale, basket, box, bundle, case, chest, crate, hamper, package, parcel, trunk and truss. Both container types were often despatched in the same shipment, for instance:

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[5] TNA, E 190/1148/2. 'Castor', the French for 'beaver', is an inconsistent felt hat descriptor. It can mean a hat made only from beaver. Here, it probably means a wool felt hat covered with a beaver nap. A demi-castor generally meant a hat made with beaver mixed with other fibre, like wool or rabbit. However, constituents and proportions varied considerably, and over time (Harold A Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada: An Introduction to Canadian Economic History*, 1930, reprint Yale University Press 1962), fn. 121, p. 74.

[6] Casks were a practical container. On the return journey to Bristol, especially when the destination had been the West Indies, they could be used to carry sugar, rum or dyestuffs. See, for example, Richard S Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713* (London, Cape 1973), p. 208.

[7] These measures, except the generic cask, descended from a 'tun' of 252 gallons and their capacity and relationship to each other 'remained unchanged for centuries' (R D Connor, *The Weights and Measures of England*, London, Science Museum 1987). Also Colonel Sir C M Watson, *British Weights and Measures as described in the Laws of England from Anglo-Saxon Times* (London, John Murray 1910); Ronald Edward Zupko, *British Weights and Measures, A History from Antiquity to the Seventeenth Century* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1977). For standardisation legislation, 6 Anne c. 27, *An Act for continuing several Subsidies, Impositions and Duties, and for making Provisions therein mentioned, to raise Money by way of Loan for the Service of the War, and other Her Majesty's necessary and important Occasions; and for ascertaining the Wine Measure*. For similar difficulties, this time in assessing the Gloucestershire cider trade, P T M Woodland, 'Bristol Merchants and the overseas trade in cider c. 1773-1818', *TBGAS*, Vol. 106, 1988, pp. 173-188. Appendix 40: *Counting the hats, 1679-1855.*

17 January 1797, *Friendship*, master T Thatcher, bound for Jamaica, one hogshead, two boxes and one puncheon of felt hats, shipped by the Bristol merchant J Maxse.[8]

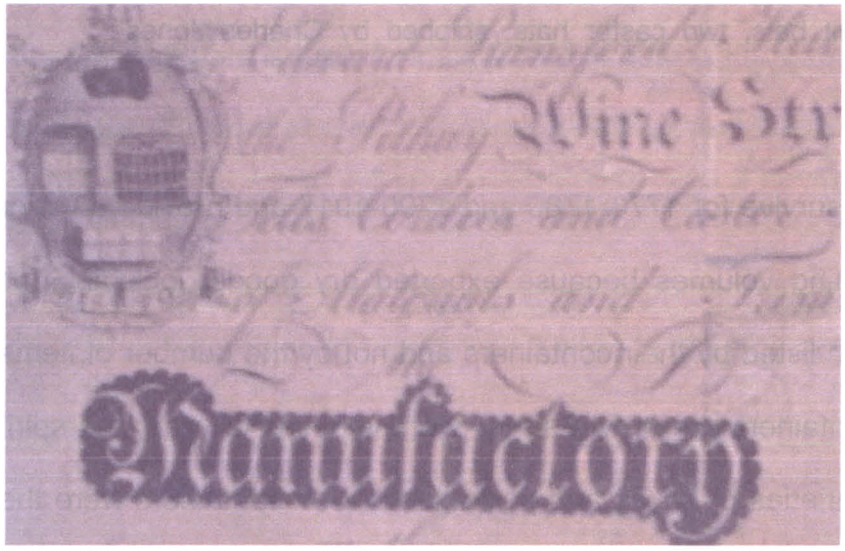

Figure 56: Detail from an invoice from Edward Ransford's hat manufactory on the corner of Bristol's Pithay. Note, top left, the depictions of packages for exports: a barrel marked hats, a trunk and a basket.[9]

For six years, 1773 and 1776-1780, there is overlap between the two sources of export shipments. All hat cargoes for the three most complete years, 1773, 1777 and 1778, were transcribed from both records and consolidated to form one list for each year.[10] Each source seriously under-records the number of cargoes and the number of hats when compared to the combined annual totals.[11] E 190 cargoes range from 49% of the combined total in 1773 to 83% in 1778; the Presentments from 85% in 1773 to 55% in 1778. As a rule-of-

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[8] BCL, Bristol Presentments, 1797.
[9] Blaise Castle Museum, Braikenridge Collection, TA 5603.
[10] The E 190 register for 1773 has serious damage at its edges, especially at its top. While dates and ships can often be read, perhaps 10-15% of customable cargoes are lost; the E 190 book of 1779 also has imperfect folios. TNA: E 190: 1229/4, 6/1/1773-5/1/1774, 81 folios; 1231/1, 6/1/1777-5/1/1778, 57 folios; 1232/1, 6/1/1778-5/1/1779, 48 folios, 1232/7, 6/1/1779-5/1/1780, 51 folios.
[11] Sven-Erik Åström, 'The Reliability of the English Port Books', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, Vol. XVI, No. 2, 1968, pp. 125–136, citing T C Smout, *Scottish Trade on the Eve of Union 1660-1707* (Edinburgh, Oliver and Boyd 1963), p. 32.

thumb, the three-year average for both sources under-records the number of cargoes by about 30%.[12] The hat shortfall between the recorded cargoes is even more significant. In 1778, for instance, only 24% of hats recorded in the relevant E 190 port book was also recorded in that year's Presentments.[13]

These partial views may not apply to other dry goods, or indeed any goods.[14] Nothing indicates how far through the years, forward or backwards, these inaccuracies extend. No answer was found in the types of packaging or their rate of use.[15] The sample covers three years in an eight-year period which is only some twenty years before the complete discontinuance of the port book system in 1797.[16] Sloppiness may have become established. However, felt hats, when listed, were not casually recorded; individual cargoes were to the dozen with many instances of part dozens, the standard hatter's measure.[17] It is the non-recording of whole cargoes, and sometimes vessels, which is the problem. The accuracy of port records has often been questioned because of the unknown extents of smuggling, evasion and fraud.[18] G N Clark wrote that

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[12] Appendix 40: *Counting the hats, 1679-1855.*
[13] Appendix 40: *Counting the hats, 1679-1855.*
[14] Evan T Jones, *Inside the Illicit Economy: Reconstructing the Smugglers' Trade of Sixteenth Century Bristol* (Farnham, Ashgate, forthcoming 2012), p. 87.
[15] Appendix 40: *Counting the hats, 1679-1855.*
[16] G N Clark, *Guide to English Commercial Statistics, 1696-1782*, No. 1 (London, Offices of the Royal Historical Society 1938), p. 43.
[17] Thomas Christy junior to Samuel Christy 12/8/1845 (CA, B/SS/6/16); to Edmund Christy from Frampton Cotterell and order 7/1/1855 (CA, B/P/4/30).
[18] McGrath, *Merchants and Merchandise*, p. xx. On smuggling in Bristol, see the work of Evan T Jones: 'Illicit business: accounting for smuggling in mid-sixteenth-century Bristol', *The Economic History Review*, Vol. LIV, No. 1, 2001, particularly pp. 17-38; *Illicit Economy*, particularly pp. 4-17, 81. Also, Martin Rorke, 'English and Scottish Overseas Trade, 1300-1600', *The Economic History Review*, Vol. 59, No. 2, May, 2006, pp. 267-268.

'in the absence of strong arguments to the contrary, it must be held that in the late eighteenth century the port books formed very imperfect records'.[19]

Hat cargoes for twenty-six years from 1679 to 1855 were fully transcribed and a set of algorithms developed to allow extrapolation for the whole period.[20] The number of hats exported to all destinations from Bristol was 5,644,609. If allowance is made for various losses and omissions, it seems likely that the real export volumes were at least 10% higher.[21] When the corrections for the shortfalls uncovered in the years 1773-1778 were applied across the board, total hat exports rose to just over 8½ million suggesting a working total of 6-8 million hats exported to all destinations by 1855.

There were two main export groups: a conventional commercial trade to overseas markets, particularly in North America, and to a few incidental destinations; and another, larger, trade directly connected to the slave business. From 1679-1835, between 3-4½ million hats, about 55% of all hats despatched from the port of Bristol, were sent either in the slave ships to West Africa or to the plantations, primarily for slave wear. The trade was at its peak between 1770-1810. The quality of hats shipped to New England ports varied;

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[19] Clark, *English Commercial Statistics*, p. 43. No explanation for the varied reporting is found in Francis Hargrave, *Collectanea Juridica*, Vol. 1, *Consisting of Tracts Relative to the Law and Constitution of England* (1840, reprint General Books 2009).

[20] An average of one transcription every 6.77 years; the gaps are not even, reflecting absences and the condition of records. Appendix 41: *International hat cargoes, 1679-1855.*

[21] Quality check: poor folios - 5% through water or vellum damage; average 4% missed in transcription; 2% variation after checking loadings with landings in business journals: *The Beekman Mercantile Papers 1744-1799*, transcribed, edited Philip L White, Vol. 2, 'James Beekman correspondence, 1750-1776 (New-York Historical Society, 1956); Jamaica Public Archives, *Richard Way Inventory*, Vol. 3, Folio 393, 1686-1694, 1B/11/3, transcribed by John Innes and Richard Lott, *Port Royal Project 2000*, Texas A&M University; principal investigator Professor Donny L Hamilton, Head of Anthropology, Texas A&M University.

many of them were of poor manufacture. If an arbitrary half of the 'normal' shipments to New England are assumed also to be plantation traffic rather than for public sale and included in the figures for slave trade, slave hat exports with correction would be about 5½ million, taking the trade to near two-thirds of hat exports.

Some of these cargoes were individually large, for instance 8,544 felt hats sent by John Protheroe junior to Halifax on the *Maria* in 1819, but these volumes are concentrated after 1800 and are untypical. Across the sample of twenty-six years, there were 2,284 individual shipments, 2,198 by named firms or individuals, with an average content of 253 hats. More than 90% of these shipments were made by Bristol merchants as part of wider cargoes. A merchant's name might appear, as father and, later, son, and as part of a series of partnerships. The various combinations of Gibbs & Bright, Bright & Co, and E Baillie, Sons, & Co have eighty-five mentions. The Protheroe family concerns are listed fifty-one times. Other stalwarts of the merchant community were William Fry, 34; Thomas Daniel & Sons, 32; Meyler & Maxse, 22; Henry Cruger junior (and Mallard), 16; and Claxton, 15.[22] William Cormack, 26, and

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[22] There are a large number of sources for more information on these firms and individuals particularly Patrick McGrath, 'The Wills of Bristol Merchants in the Great Orphan Books', *TBGAS*, Vol. 68, 1949, pp. 91-109; *Records Relating to the Society of Merchant Venturers of the City of Bristol in the Seventeenth Century* (BRS, Vol. 17, 1951); *Merchants and Merchandise in the Seventeenth Century Bristol* (BRS, Vol. 19, 1955); and *John Whitson and the Merchant Community of Bristol*, No. 25, BBTHA, 1970; C M MacInnes, *Bristol: A Gateway to Empire*, 1939 (Newton Abbot, David & Charles 1968). W E Minchinton, *The Port of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century*, No. 5, BBTHA, 1962; David Richardson, *The Bristol Slave Traders: A Collective Portrait*, No. 60, BBTHA, 1985, reprint 2001; Morgan, *Atlantic Trade*; *Edward Colston and Bristol*, No. 96, BBTHA, 1999; *Slavery, Atlantic Trade and the British Economy, 1660-1800* (CUP 2000); P K Stembridge, *The Goldney family - A Bristol Merchant Dynasty*

George Kift, 21, dominated the Irish trade. It is impossible to ascertain how many of the shippers were hatters dealing with their own products. There were dozens of individuals fulfilling small orders, like Moses Brain, feltmaker, and Meredith Davis, haberdasher of hats, both in 1742, and both masters of the Company. Their individual endeavours may have been surrounded by either considerable or short-lived trades. The principal identified hat manufacturers were mostly family concerns: Dowell, 72; Ransford, 63; Gardiner 21; Owen 13; and Payne, 13.

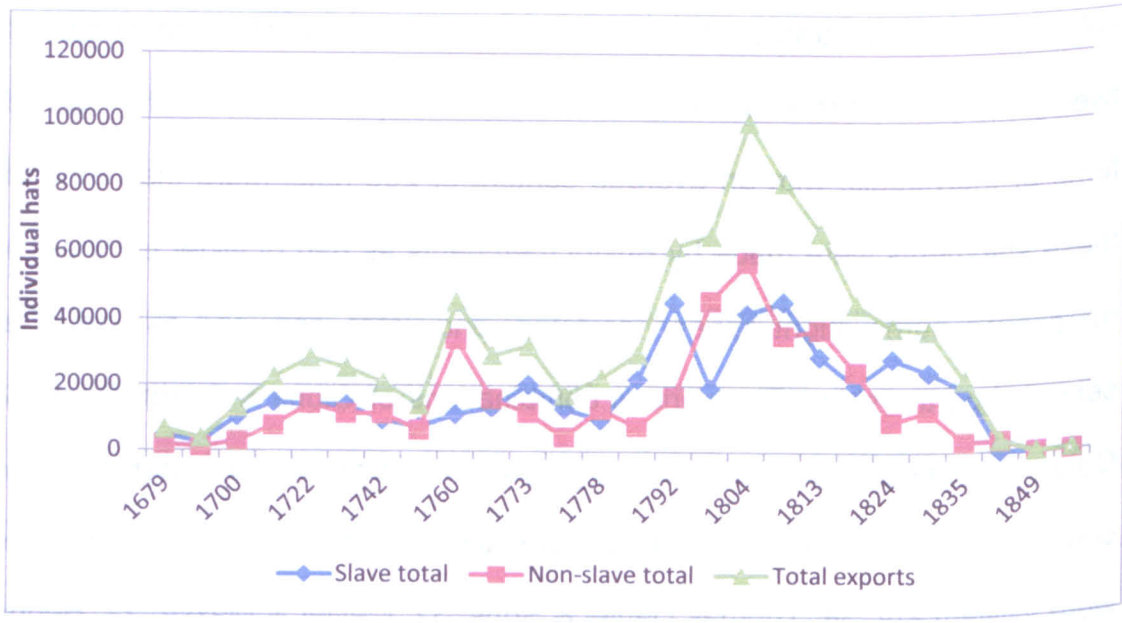

Figure 57: Bristol felt hat exports: 1679-1855.[23]

The approach now is to review these two export groups separately beginning with the conventional trade. Bristol exported parcels of hats and caps from the fifteenth century, particularly to Iberia and to Iceland; if felts, these were re-

(BRS, Vol. 49, 1998); Jonathan Barry, *The Diary of William Dyer: Bristol in 1762* (BRS, Vol. 64, 2012).

[23] North American city shipments are included in the 'non-slave' total.

exports.[24] The city was supplying the new Atlantic colonies from 1650.[25] Beaver fibre for the hat market was already in great demand with the near eradication of the Swedish and Russian supply. Monopoly pricing drove up the price of beaver hats, and also raised the price of European goods to the Indian trappers with their 'insatiable demands'.[26] Laws were passed (1634 France, 1638 England) forbidding the use of substitute fibres in the manufacturing of beaver hats.[27] In 1661, already baulking against forced reliance on English manufacturing, the Virginia Assembly offered ten pounds of tobacco for every good wool or fur hat produced in the commonwealth.[28] By 1679, when this full investigation begins, Bristol's hat volumes to Iberia and Ireland were small and steady and Iceland was not mentioned. Robert Way, a Port Royal merchant, in 1693 included in his stock a wide variety of quality hats supplied by William Fry senior and junior, Bristol hatters.[29]

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[24] Hats, combs, etc, customs valuation, £1; two gross unlined caps, £2 14s: 12/2/1480, *Leonard* of Bristol, John Gogh to Iceland, shipper Denis Bracy; six gross unlined caps, £5: 14/2/1482, *Christopher* of Bristol, Thomas Sutton, to Iceland, shipper John Shipward (Carus-Wilson, *Overseas Trade of Bristol*), pp. 252-253. 'Ships often took nothing but cloth [to Portugal in 1482], though occasionally the monotony was varied by iron, lead, halyards, hats, barrel staves, or an alabaster reredos'; [fifteenth century to Iceland] 'among articles of attire for the delectation of both men and women' were hats and caps (Carus-Wilson, *Medieval Merchant Venturers*), pp. 60, 131.

[25] Peter Fleming, 'Emergence of Modern Bristol' in Dresser and Ollerenshaw, *Making*, p. 3.

[26] Daniel P Barr, *Unconquered, The Iroquois League at War in Colonial America* (Westport, Connecticut, Praeger 2006), pp. 19-26, 98, 102-105. Innis, *Fur Trade*, p. 16.

[27] H T Martin, *Castorologia, or the History and Traditions of the Canadian Beaver* (Stanford 1892; reprint Milton Keynes, General Books 2011), pp. 123-124; Innis, fn. 27, p. 16.

[28] Fisher, *Hatters*, p. 18.

[29] This probate inventory survived from the year after two-thirds of Port Royal was destroyed by tidal waves following an earthquake. Fry senior had in Way's store thirty-three castor hats for youths and forty-seven Carolina hats, twelve edged with gold, together worth £11 3s 6d. Fry junior had 112 hats worth £24 13s 9d, including French hats, black and white castors, white beavers and one superfine white beaver (Hamilton, *Port Royal Project 2000*).

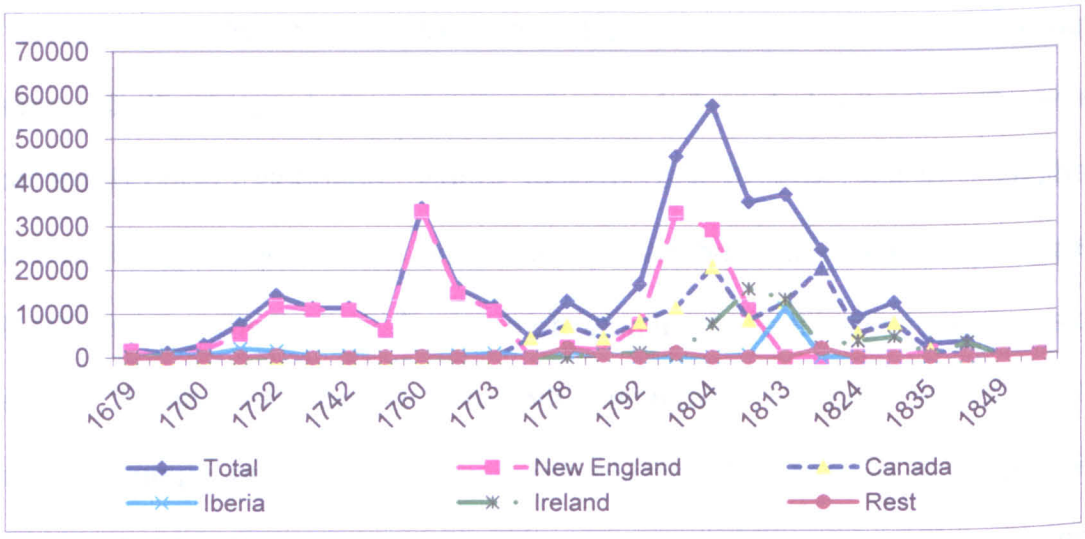

Figure 58: Conventional hat exports, 1679-1855.

By the late seventeenth century, Bristol was a major player in a vast 'Empire of goods', second only to the capital in the value and range of its trade.[30] The city's hat industry played its part. Significant growth is seen in shipments to the planters in the West Indies, but equally so in the north, for example to Boston, Halifax, Long Sound, Lower Canada, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, New England, New York, Pennsylvania, Philadelphia and Quebec.[31]

Britain was at war for forty-two years of the eighteenth century. For much of that time privateers roamed off Bristol, even setting up a station on Lundy

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[30] T H Breen, 'An empire of goods: the anglicization of colonial America 1690-1776', *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. XXV, 1986, pp. 467-499. Also John Styles, 'Manufacturing, consumptions and design in eighteenth-century England', Chapter 25, in Brewer and Porter, *Consumption*, pp. 527-548.

[31] Iberia: Alicante, Bilbao, Cadiz, Corunna, Faro, Gibraltar, Lisbon, Malaga, Oporto, Santander and Vigo. Ireland: Belfast, Cork, Downpatrick, Dublin, Galloway, Kinsale, Limerick, Sligo, Waterford and Wexford. There were a few intriguing single destination voyages carrying felt hats, for instance, Dunkirk, Leghorn (the port of the Italian straw hat trade), Melbourne, Norway, Palermo, Surinam, Stockholm, and Venice.

Island.[32] During the wars through to 1713, with beaver supply curtailed, *laine de vigogne*, a wool from a species of llama in Peru, was used instead of *castor gras* to mix with *castor sec* for the manufacture of hats.[33] War against the Spanish was proclaimed in Bristol 'amidst demonstrations of joy', but the Bristol Channel was regularly blocked and there was a considerable loss of ships.[34] The Bristol hat trade was in occasional distress. A vessel carrying felt hats made by Davies, Owen, Swanton was captured by the Combined Fleets.[35] Colonialists, especially in New York and New England, took to making their own hats using a combination of local beaver fur, short apprenticeships and cheap 'negro' labour.[36] With the addition of duty evasion, these hatters undersold the home trade by up to five shillings a hat.[37]

In 1729, the Company complained to the Comptroller of Customs in Bristol that Peter Lovell, part of their establishment, a feltmaker from Castle Precincts who grew into a haberdasher, had 'sold to several Virginia merchants large quantities of hats [and] insisted on carrying on his trade and continuing in his

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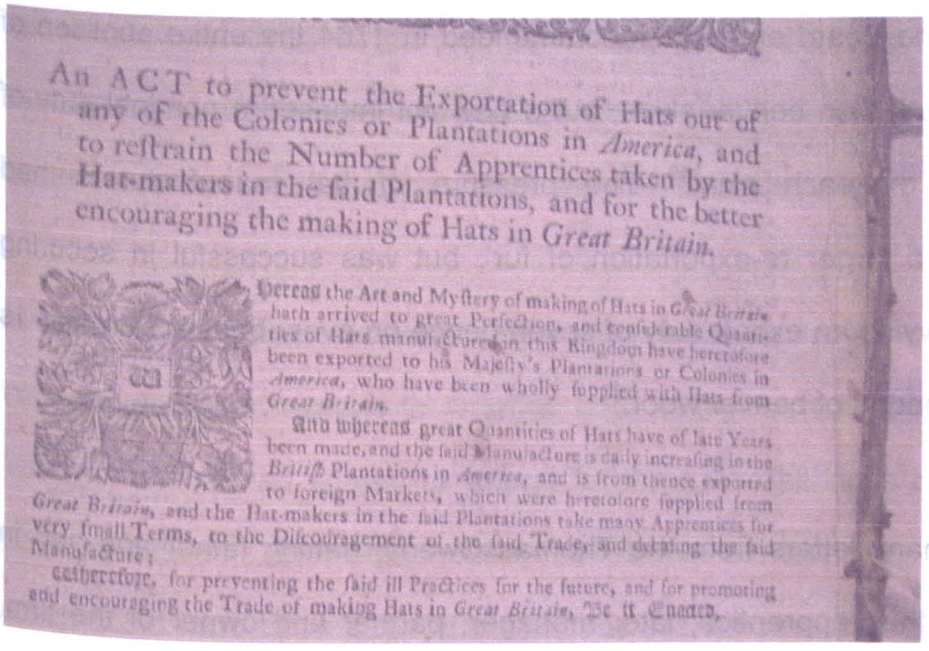
[32] War of the Spanish Succession, 1703-1713; War of the Quadruple Alliance, 1718-1720; Wars of Jenkins' Ear and the Austrian Succession, 1739-1748; Seven Years' War, 1756-1763; War of American Independence, 1775-1783 (Kenneth Morgan, 'Bristol and the Atlantic Trade in the Eighteenth Century', *The English Historical Review*, Vol. CVII, No. 424, 1992), pp. 630-632.
[33] Innis, *Fur Trade*, p. 75.
[34] Latimer, *Annals*. p. 216.
[35] TNA, C 12/1263/19.
[36] The leading centre of the eighteenth and nineteenth-century felt hat industry in the USA was in Danbury, Connecticut ('Hat City'), 'because the numerous rivers ... attracted fur-bearing animals' (Fisher, *Hatters*, pp. 20-22).
[37] The wage paid for the hat was 1s 3d, the corresponding wage in England was 4s 6d or 5s (*HCJ*, Vol. xxxi), p. 824; also Lipson, *Economic History*, Vol. 3, pp. 192-193.



An ACT to prevent the Exportation of Hats out of any of the Colonies or Plantations in *America*, and to reſtrain the Number of Apprentices taken by the Hat-makers in the ſaid Plantations, and for the better encouraging the making of Hats in *Great Britain*.

Whereas the Art and Myſtery of making of Hats in *Great Britain* hath arrived to great Perfection, and conſiderable Quantities of Hats manufactured in this Kingdom have heretofore been exported to his Majeſty's Plantations or Colonies in *America*, who have been wholly ſupplied with Hats from *Great Britain*.

And whereas great Quantities of Hats have of late Years been made, and the ſaid Manufacture is daily increaſing in the *Britiſh* Plantations in *America*, and is from thence exported to foreign Markets, which were heretofore ſupplied from *Great Britain*, and the Hat-makers in the ſaid Plantations take many Apprentices for very ſmall Terms, to the Diſcouragement of the ſaid Trade, and debaſing the ſaid Manufacture;

And therefore, for preventing the ſaid ill Practices for the future, and for promoting and encouraging the Trade of making Hats in *Great Britain*, Be it Enacted,

Figure 59: The 1732 Colonial Hat Act, stuck to the inside cover of the Company's minute book.[45]

The taking of Quebec by Wolfe in 1759 delivered the Canadian waterways into British hands and 'virtually the sole monopoly of the best North American fur areas'.[46] The French hat industry, principal competitors, was reduced to making inferior hats. 'The [American] Revolution removed such handicaps but the supply of furs [remained] cut off and musquash skins were actually imported [by the French] from London'.[47] Bristol's hatters, presumably the Company, sent a petition to parliament to join those of many other towns asking for deep cuts in beaver tariffs to enable profitable competition with the French.[48] Bristol's beaver was mixed with 'coney wool, goat's wool, and other

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[45] 5 George II, c. 22. BRO, 08156/2.
[46] Lawson, 'Fur', p. 1.
[47] 'To the Duke of Leeds' [Francis Osborne, foreign secretary to Pitt the Younger, 1783-1791], 10/11/1789, No. 59, 'Letters of Phineas Bond', *American Historical Association Report* (Washington, 1896), pp. 632-633. Also Innis, *Fur Trade*, fn. 92, p. 145.
[48] *HCJ*, 1/2/1764, Vol. 29, p. 775, after an act in 1763 repealing duties on imports and for taking off the drawback on re-exports (George III, c. 9). The effects of French subsidies were serious. The select committee reported that in the year from Christmas 1749, 46,234 dozen of

place of [customs] weighing'.[38] Lovell was given a month's leave of absence from his customs work to sell his stock and the Collector 'did take care to see that said Lovell did then quit his business as a feltmaker or haberdasher'.[39] 'Said Lovell departed this life before the time expired.'

The colonial hatters and their cheap hats turned their attention first to the West Indies but, growing in confidence, then sold to Ireland and England.[40] For Bristol, the chief export market of the West Indies was a serious incursion, but to find the hats for sale in England demanded action. In 1732, the Colonial Hat Act prohibited 'hats or felts' in any condition being shipped from any of the plantations.[41] There were also restrictions on apprenticeship and the hiring of 'negro' labour. The Hat Act was 'only one of the many annoying laws that drove the people of the colonies to seek their liberty from English rule forty-five years later'.[42] The 'absurd and irritating' legislation might easily have led to a Boston Hat Party.[43] In 1736, France followed Britain by closing down colonial hat shops in their North American territories.[44]

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[38] The petition was signed 19/2/1729 by Geo Watkins, James Harding, Arthur Hooper, Thos Owen, Wm Pow, Wm Dapwold, Richard Tiley, John Pontin, John Davis, Roger Bayley, Meredith Davies and Richard Price (BRO, 08156/2), p. 128.

[39] It is not clear exactly what the feltmakers concerns were other than a conflict of interest. Was it fear of tax evasion and, therefore a lower landing price in Virginia? For a sixteenth century view from Bristol, Jones, *Illicit business.*

[40] The Hatmakers' Case (Goldsmiths' Library, Collection of Broadsides, V, No. 405). Also HCJ, XXI, p. 824; and Giles, 'Felt-Hatting', pp. 108-109.

[41] 5 George II, c. 22 (1732): *An Act to prevent the Exportation of Hats out of any of the Colonies or Plantations in America, and to restrain the Number of Apprentices taken by the Hat-makers in the said Plantations, and for the better encouraging the making of Hats in Great Britain.*

[42] Fisher, *Hatters*, p. 10.

[43] Christopher P Hill, *British Economic and Social History, 1700-1982*, 5th edition (London, Hodder Arnold 1985), pp. 128-129. Harold A Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada: An Introduction to Canadian Economic History* (1930, reprint Yale University Press 1962), fn. 2, p. 145.

[44] Anne M Convery, *Colonial hat manufacture and the Hat Act of 1732* (1959).

materials'. The Board of Trade recommended in 1764 the entire abolition of the import duties on beaver skins, but a new act imposed a nominal duty of one penny on each skin.[49] The pressure of hat manufacturers had 'occasioned a larger re-exportation of fur', but was successful in securing measures levying an export duty of seven pence on every beaver skin and 1s 6d on each pound of beaver wool.[50]

There are many letters from the Thomas Owens, hatting father and son in Bristol, and their apprentice, later manager, partner and owner of the firm, John Stonehouse, in the papers of long term New York customer and merchant James Beekman.[51] They provide insight as to the difficulties of exporting and of quality control when dealing with the South Gloucestershire hatters. Price was often a problem as Beekman put the pressure on the newly-in-charge Owen junior. In 1764, Owen wrote that he was

> ... sorry there should be room for you to complain of the last hats. No man ever took more care to have them made fine and good at the prices than we ever did, but cannot say they have been so fine as could have wished them of late, and owing to the wickedness of our *jurnimen* in not doing their work as it should be. But now they are of another way of thinking and am persuaded those now sent you will find much finer.[52]

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beaver and castor hats were exported, and that this fell twelve years later to 20,384 dozen, and the half year following to 6,203 dozen (HCJ, 5/3/1764, Vol. 29), pp. 905-907. This was a long-running sore: 1752, *HCJ*, Vol. 11, pp. 373-775; *Sessional Papers*, Vol. 19, pp. 6, 184.

[49] 4 George III, c. 9.

[50] Innis, *Fur Trade*, p. 170.

[51] White, *Beekman Mercantile Papers*.

[52] Beekman: From Thomas Owen, 21/7/1764.

Four years later Owen wrote that 'our men is become our masters and [we] cannot get hats at this time made for money. Have by me orders for 500 dozen more that I shall [not] be able to let my friends have in the time'.[53]

In 1769, Beekman ordered hats to be sent only after the repeal of the act that imposed duties on exports to America and, next year, told Owen that New York merchants had agreed to 'import for the future all kinds of goods that pays no duties'.[54] John Stonehouse was left with the aftermath of this order which could have been shipped earlier, but 'our demand was so great when order came to ship, it was impossible for to get goods made, did not dare to keep so many goods by us being a perishable commodity and there not being a call for them it would have half ruined us'.[55]

Bristol merchants paid a heavy price as the American War of Independence seriously disrupted commerce.[56] At the outbreak, 8,000 tons of material were returned to Bristol unloaded. The 'volume of incoming shipping from transatlantic regions fell 41.8 percent to the lowest level of trade since the War of Austrian Succession'.[57] In 1775, the number of ships paying mayor's dues was 529; by 1781 it shrank to 101.[58] North American hat exports which had increased rapidly from about 1700 were restricted to Canadian ports.

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[53] Beekman: *From Thomas Owen*, 23/2/1768.
[54] Beekman: To Thomas Owen, Bristol, 6/9/1769; 10/7/1770.
[55] Beekman: From George Stonehouse, Bristol, 13/10/1770.
[56] Petition by Bristol merchants in 1775 on trade to the West Indies and Americas (*HCJ*, 15 George III), columns 168-182.
[57] Morgan, *Atlantic Trade*, p. 25.
[58] Latimer, *Annals*, pp. 414-415.

Stonehouse wrote to Beekman in 1775 that he hoped the 'present contention between this country and America will soon be amicably settled and trade once more be established in its former good footing'.[59] Beekman equally hoped that the troubles 'may soon be at an end by restoring to us a proper redress of our grievances so that trade may again flourish in the former channel'.[60]

The song *Yankee Doodle* was sung by the King's soldiers to 'ridicule the untrained American fighting men' and their custom of wearing a feather in a felt hat.[61] Far from being disconcerted, the American forces adopted the song as their own. When General Washington and the Comte de Rochambeau accepted the British surrender at Georgetown in 1781, the band of the Continental Army struck up *Yankee Doodle* as Cornwallis's troops marched away.[62]

Bristol quickly regained its lost hat export volumes with the aid of additional impetus from the Canadian territories. After a gap of eight years, Stonehouse tried to resurrect his business with Beekman. 'As there is little doubt but every obstacle is or will be almost immediately removed that have long interrupted the good understanding between the two countries, we take the liberty to

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[59] Beekman: From Stonehouse & Co, Bristol, 3/3/1775.
[60] Beekman: To George Stonehouse & Co, Bristol, 18/3/1775.
[61] 'Yankee Doodle went to town / A-riding on a pony / He stuck a feather in his hat / And called it Macaroni.' (Macaroni – foppish, over-fashionable man, OED, 2005).
[62] Fisher, *Hatters*, p. 22.

request a renewal of our correspondence in the Hat-way'.[63] Six months later, Beekman replied with an order for sixty dozen felt hats, ranging from 12 to 33 shillings a dozen. 'Peace is now restored. I hope trade again may revive. I have done no business [during] this cruel war, as I have been with my family in the country, but as I mean again to enter in trade I would willingly renew my correspondence with my old friends'.[64]

The relationship meandered to a close. In November 1784, Beekman gave possibly his last order to be filled in the next spring, although he complained of 'rather overcharged' castor hats, and that he was now being given six months' credit although he could get twelve months' from others. The order, eighteen dozen hats or two hogsheads, is worth repeating as it shows the variety now common. In addition to requiring men's hats with larger crowns and brims and cocked, which were 'more in demand than round', he requested

> 2 doz men's cocked castors at 6s; 2 doz men's cocked castors, 8s; 3 doz men's light coloured castors, 9s; 2 doz green under 5s 6d; 2 doz men's black beaver, 10s 6d & 14s each; 2 doz women's fashionable fine black castor riding hats with furred edge; 2 doz women's fashionable light coloured castor riding hats, furred edge; 3 doz children's black castor hats, 42s per dozen.[65]

Beekman sold all the hats that year though he was

> still kept out of the money, by reason of the great and unusual scarcity of specie in our country, chiefly occasioned by the vast importations from Europe since the Peace which has drained us of

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[63] Beekman: From George Stonehouse & Co, Bristol, 2/6/1783.
[64] Beekman: To George Stonehouse & Co, Bristol, 12/1/1784.
[65] Beekman: To George Stonehouse, Bristol, 2/11/1784, 6/1/1785.

> what cash we had in circulation. I never was more disappointed that in my expectations respecting trade, which at present is so dull that it does not seem worth attending to, and so discouraging that the importations made this season have been remarkably inconsiderable. The disappointments is receiving payments long since due from our customers is a matter of general complaint and involves us in the consequent misfortune of disappointing our friends.[66]

A first payment from New York arrived in June, 1786.[67] Stonehouse tried again in September when the 'many disappointments I have met with your side the Atlantic has distressed me very much in trade'.[68] The final payment came next January, but it was the end of the association.[69] Beekman wrote twice to Stonehouse that he was 'never in the least dissatisfied with your commercial dealings', but that the 'small prospect of doing anything advantageous in trade at present determines me to decline any importations'.[70]

In 1785, English manufacturers were in outcry over a plan by Prime Minister Pitt to adopt a system of trade between Ireland and England of either completely free, or at least identical, duties. Pitt called for a system of 'equality & fairness' which would create a 'community of benefits' and a 'community of burdens'; a trade that would not 'aggrandize the one or depress the other'.[71] The uneven tax structure between the two countries gave the Bristol hatters the upper hand over the Irish hat export trade, despite its lower labour costs

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[66] Beekman: To George Stonehouse, Bristol, 29/9/1785.
[67] Beekman: From George Stonehouse, Bristol, 13/6/1786.
[68] Beekman: From George Stonehouse, Bristol, 16/9/1786.
[69] Beekman: From George Stonehouse, Bristol, 29/1/1787.
[70] Beekman: To George Stonehouse, Bristol, 18/7/1787 per brig *Mercury*, Captain Tinker; 3/12/1787 per *Sally*, Captain Greenaway.
[71] William Hague, *William Pitt The Younger* (Harper, 2005), pp. 188-90.

and local taxation. Pitt's legislation was complicated because of the pressures of Irish nationalism. Irish payments to support the English Navy were expected. Merchants led by Josiah Wedgwood organised a *Great Chamber of Manufacturers* to conduct a war of 'pressure and propaganda' against the Government. It was alleged that freer trade would ruin English manufacturers. 'The propaganda was unrealistic, but the panic was real.'[72] Bristol hatters Dowell, Gardiner and Ransford led seventeen Company members as signatories to a petition to the House of Lords.[73] The city 'manufacturers and dealers in hats' were of the opinion that the new Irish commercial system would be 'very detrimental to the interests of your petitioners'. Despite winning a parliamentary vote with a majority of nineteen, Pitt withdrew the legislation.

By 1812, British felts were displaced in the United States and Canada by domestic manufacture.[74] Bristol left long-term European markets, as before, to London and failed to enter new markets in South America and Asia.

Ransford, particularly, but other Bristol hatters as well, continued a comfortable trade to Ireland using, before 1800, a merchant intermediary, After the serious disruption of the Irish Rebellion of 1798, trade resumed in 1809.[75] Three small felt hat cargoes were sent by Ransford's sons, Thomas

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[72] J Steven Watson, 'The Reign of George III, 1760-1815', *The Oxford History of England*, (OUP, 1960), pp. 276-279.
[73] 8/7/1785 (HCL, HL/PO/JO/10/3/277/62).
[74] W H Francis, *History of the Hatting Trade in Danbury, Connecticut, from its commencement in 1780 to the present time* (Danbury, USA, Osborne 1860).
[75] 'That the long dreaded day, when the French Revolution would spread to Ireland, had now arrived, was all too clear to the gentlefolk of Wexford. They found their own trades people, their hatters and tailors, their coachmen and boatmen and shopkeepers, the solid and

and Edward, along with two shipments for Newfoundland. In view of later shipments, these Ransford 'Newfoundland' cargoes were probably for Ireland.[76] From 1827-29, the Ransfords had a substantial trade almost entirely to Cork, Dublin, Limerick and Waterford: forty-seven cargoes were sent by Edward and family partners, most of them on steam packets making weekly shuttle voyages.[77] Nine of these cargoes were various quantities of hatters' materials and trimmings intended to provide Irish hatters with the means of finishing their hats to local tastes.[78]

Shipments came to an abrupt halt after 1833; there were only four cargoes in September to November to Cork, Dublin and Waterford totalling just 600 hats; in 1833-5 there were none. The decline coincided with Thomas Ransford's bankruptcy in 1833.[79] By 1835, there were only five Bristol hat cargoes to the

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dependable foundations of the old social order, were their masters in the new (Thomas Pakenham, *The Year of Liberty: The Great Irish Rebellion of 1798*, London, Abacus 2000), p. 280.

[76] 'A practice at this time was for outward ships to call in at Ireland to drop local cargo and to collect butter, beef and lamb among other provisions' (Morgan, 'Atlantic Trade'), pp. 631-635. For some time, Bristol ships had gathered in Waterford Bay to form Atlantic convoys as protection against pirates and French and Spanish privateers.

[77] The *Nora Creina*, for instance, was a 330-ton laden vessel of 120 horse power which travelled between Bristol and Waterford every Wednesday, returning on Saturdays, and which carried twenty-three hat cargoes, almost half of the Ransfords' total. The hats were a mixture of felts, probably cordies, supplemented by castor felts and wool-felt plated hats. The *Nora Creina* was in the same fleet as the *Superb*, Cork; *Severn*, Cork; *St Patrick*, Dublin (*BM*, 18/12/1826 & 5/1/1827). 'Another kind of hat much in wear, but of course inferior in quality, is called plate-hats: they consist, in the interior, of wool, and are merely covered with a better material on the outside. The commonest hats of all are called cordies [which] are made in large quantities at, and in the neighbourhood of, Bristol, as well as plate and castor hats (Richard Phillips, *The Book of Useful Trades and Library of the Useful Arts* (London, Souter 1818). The name 'cordie' was derived from its first manufacture at Caudebec, France.

[78] The records of the Dublin Feltmaker's Company, which extended to the Irish ports that received Ransford's cargoes, offer no clue as to the Ransfords' customers (H Barry, *The Records of the Feltmakers' Company of Dublin, 1687-1841: Their Loss and Recovery*, Vol. 41, Part I, Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland. 1911), pp. 26-45.

[79] *BM*: Declaration of insolvency, 4/5/1833; Certificate of bankruptcy, 16/11/1833; Audit of accounts and payment of final dividend, 26/7/1834.

whole of Ireland. The trade seems to have gone to London manufacturers. This loss was particularly surprising as the Irish domestic hat business collapsed in the 1830s.[80] In 1836, Bowler & Son advertised to 'the Nobility, Gentry, Merchants, and other Inhabitants' in the Northern Exchange Wholesale and Retail Hat Mart Belfast, alongside other London manufacturers Christy's, Carrington, and Harris.[81]

The involvement of Bristol's hat manufacturers in the slave trade is one of the recurring, but ancillary, themes in Bristol histories. Madge Dresser highlighted two Bristol vessels which, in 1679, carried 'not only the various types of cloth popular with West Africans, but the felt hats which were an indispensable commodity on slaving ships after 1698'; she noted 'prestige goods', including 'negro hats edged in gold, silver or copper'.[82] Dorothy Vinter wrote that Bristol ships sailed with felt hats for Virginia, Georgia, Africa and the West Indies; K Hudson said that slave hats were delivered by the beginning of the sugar-cutting season; John Moore described the plantation trade as 'booming' and that light and well waterproofed hats gave protection from sun and rain at

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[80] 'From 1828 to about 1838, the journeymen hatters in Dublin were so intolerably selfish and blind to their own interest, by forcing up the price of labour beyond the remunerating point to the employers, that they ultimately banished the trade form the country' (James Dawson Burn, *A Glimpse at The Social Conditions of The Working Classes during the early part of the Present Century, Trade Strikes and their Consequences to the People who may be immediately Connected with them with Reflections upon Trades' Unions and their Management*, London Heywood 1868), p. 41.

[81] *The Belfast News-Letter*, 22/3/1836.

[82] Madge Dresser, *Slavery Obscured, The Social History of the Slave Trade in Bristol* (Bristol, Continuum 2007), pp. 15, 31, using transcriptions in McGrath, *Merchants and Merchandise*, p. 268; and from TNA, E 190/1140/3. The two ships, *Hopewell*, bound for 'Maderas', carried 'seaven dossen of Felt hatts', and *Mary*, for 'Cape de Vard Islands', 'thre Dossen of felt hatts'. Earlier, in 1662, *Industry* took seven dozen felt hats from Bristol to Barbados (TNA, E 190/1240/6).

harvest.[83] Mary Issac thought production was associated with Rangeworthy on the northern edge of the felt hat area; Ian Bishop suggested Oldland Common at the southern limit.[84]

Bristol's rapid success in West Africa was the city's due as the port for England's earlier slave trades.[85] Eric Williams thought Bristol's knowledge of white servitude invaluable. 'Kidnapping in Africa encountered no such difficulties as were encountered in England. Captains had the experience of the one trade to guide them in the other. Bristol, the centre of the servant trade, became one of the centres of the slave trade.'[86]

The city's slave trading years are generally felt to begin in 1698 with the end of the Royal African Company's monopoly and to finish in 1807 when the British government banned slaving by its citizens.[87] The first date, at least, is

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[83] Dorothy Vinter, 'Village Hatters', *HG*, March 1958, pp. 62-63. K Hudson, 'The Lesser Industries of Bristol', Appendix 2 in *The Industrial Archaeology of Southern England* (Dawlish, David & Charles 1965), p. 189. Moore, 'Settlement', p. 22.

[84] Mary Isaac, *The fascinating history of Rangeworthy, Bagstone and Hall End* (Rangeworthy Women's Institute, 1988), p. 99. Ian S Bishop, *Oldland: The Village and the Parish* (Oldland Common, private 1993), p. 86.

[85] Bristol's slavery record: The *Ostmen* in the eleventh century; the 'vile' kidnappings of Stephen's reign; the 10,000 white voluntary servants and 3,000 convicts, rogues, rebels and political prisoners (Harold G Brown, *Bristol England*, Bristol, Rankin 1946), pp. 24-25, 144-145. See David Souden, 'Rogues, Whores and Vagabonds? Indentured Servant Emigrants to North America, and the Case of Mid-Seventeenth Century Bristol', *Social History*, Vol. 3, No. 1, January 1978, p. 24; McGrath, *Merchant Venturers*, p. 59; Hilary McD Beckles, 'The Economic Origins of Black Slavery in the British West Indies, 1640-1680: A Tentative Analysis of the Barbados Model', *Journal of Caribbean History*, Vol. 16, 1982, pp. 42-43; Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, p. 70. Also Peter Wilson Coldham, *The Bristol Registers of Servants Sent to Foreign Plantations, 1654-1686* (Clearfield, 1988); Peter Aughton, *Bristol: A People's History* (Lancaster, Carnegie Publishing 2000), p. 99; Robert Cann, Robert Yate, Thomas Speed (*Calendar of State Papers*, D 1651, 1651/2 324, 575); Harlow, *Thomas Speed*, p. 22; C M MacInnes, *England and Slavery* (Bristol, Arrowsmith 1934), p. 21.

[86] Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (1944, reprint London, Deutsch 1964), p. 19.

[87] *Bill For Settling The Trade to Africa*, (1698). Also C M MacInnes, *Bristol and the Slave Trade*, No. 7, BBTHA, 1963), pp. 3-5. *Slave Trade Act*, George III 1, c. 36 (1807). For use of

suspect.[88] Before 1698, Bristol merchants smarted from their exclusion from yet another London monopoly and, particularly, from the *asiento* contract for the delivery of slaves to Spanish possessions.[89] Attempts to free the trade were supported by petitions from the city's clothiers and weavers whose goods were a part of early slave barter.[90] Colin MacInnes was confident that an early hidden trade existed; growing numbers of the ships frequented the Bight of Benin and returned with valuable colonial produce.[91] By 1695, John Cary, a Bristol merchant, described the African trade as of the 'most Advantage to this kingdom of any we drive, and as it were all Profit ... the traffic in negroes being indeed the best Traffick the Kingdom hath'.[92]

The volume of annual hat exports mirrored each year's slave voyages. Hats were found on just over 50% of West African ships in the years sampled; they

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these dates to limit review see, for instance, David Richardson, *Bristol, Africa and the Eighteenth Century Slave Trade to America* (BRS, Vols. 38-39, 42, 47, 1986-96). Also Gomer Williams, *History of the Liverpool Privateers and Letters of Marque with an Account of the Liverpool Slave Trade 1744-1812* (London, Heinemann 1897; reprint Liverpool University Press 2004), pp. 466-467.

[88] Richard Stone, *The Trade of Bristol after the Restoration* (unpublished PhD paper, University of Bristol 2009).

[89] *An Act for incorporating the Company of Royall Adventurers of England Tradeing into Africa*, 6/4/1671 (HCL, HL/PO/JO/10/1/348). 'It was over this *asiento* that the British, French and Dutch fought wars' (Hilary McD Beckles and Verene A Shepherd, *Liberties Lost: Caribbean Indigenous Societies and Slave Systems*, CUP 2004), pp. 62-63. A copy of the English *asiento* agreement is in Elizabeth Donnan, *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America*, Vol. 2, 'The Eighteenth Century' (Washington, DC, Carnegie Institute 1931, reprint New York, Octagon Books 1965), pp. 16-21. For other trade exclusions see C M MacInnes, *Bristol: A Gateway to Empire* (1939, reprint Newton Abbot, David & Charles 1968), pp. 175-176.

[90] *Plantation Trade Act*, 16/3/1696, 7&8 William III, c. 22 (HCL, HL/PO/JO/10/1/484/1047). This record contains petitions from several merchants and owners of ships trading to the plantations. Also MacInnes, *England and Slavery*, p. 28.

[91] C M MacInnes, 'Bristol and Overseas Expansion', Chapter 14, in C M MacInnes and W F Whittard, edited, *Bristol and Its Adjoining Counties* (Bristol, British Association for the Advancement of Science 1955), p. 227. Also, MacInnes, *England and Slavery*, p. 28.

[92] J Cary, *An Essay on the State of England, in relation to its Trade, its Poor and its Taxes, for carrying on the present wars against France* (Bristol, author, 1695).

became an almost permanent inclusion towards the end of England's slave trading. Morgan described 2,114 slaving ventures from Bristol, which suggests 200 hats a voyage.[93] Dresser believed '486,059 enslaved Africans [were] delivered by Bristol to the New World' from 2,008 voyages.[94]

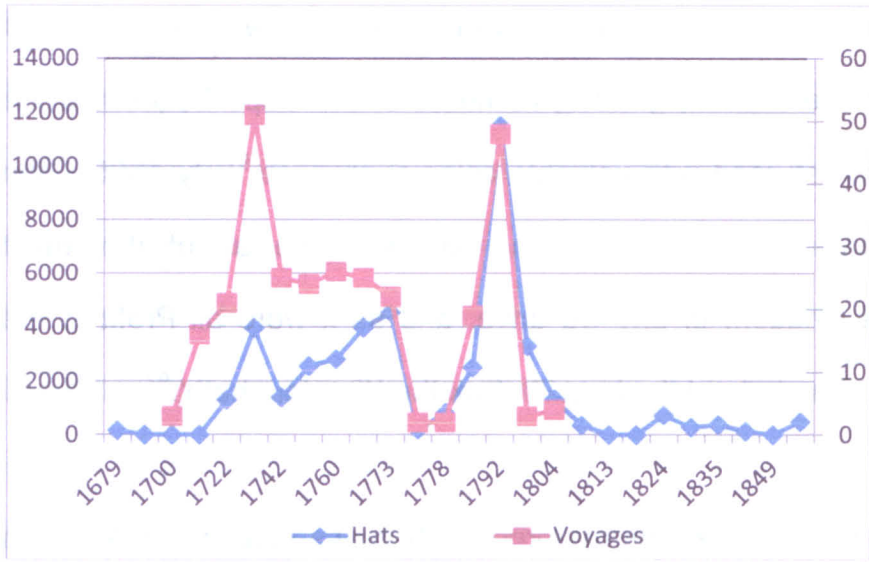

Figure 60: Hat exports, Bristol to West Africa, 1679-1855; slaving voyages, 1700-1804.

There was little 'hat' activity in the slave trade's early years. After a gradual rise in the popularity of the hat for slave barter from 1720 to 1775, voyages fell steeply during the American War of Independence.[95] In 1792, with trade resumed, a record 11,510 hats were shipped to West Africa. The next year, Bristol suffered a 'severe economic crisis in which mercantile credit was curtailed, banks collapsed, and merchants went bankrupt'.[96] Slaving voyages,

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[93] Morgan, *Atlantic Trade*, pp. 129-131. There is some under-recording, For instance, to be added are: 1767: *Albion*, John Morgan; *Celia*, Jos Carter; *Charming Molly*, Jas Maxwell; *Penn*, Walter Robe; *Rialto*, John Parnell. 1773: *Colston*, John Johnson (James Jones owner). 1792: *Catherine*, J Wilson. 1804: possibly, *Marshall*, J D Kenkins, to Madeira (TNA, E 190 1227/5, 1229/4; Bristol Presentments).

[94] Dresser, *Slave Trade*, p. 28.

[95] Voyages from Richardson, *Bristol, Africa*.

[96] 'Nineteen Bristol commercial houses failed for over £1,000,000' (Morgan, *Atlantic Trade*), p. 29.

never carrying more than 5% of the hat trade, plummeted and never recovered before abolition in 1807.

There was a small, but important, post-1807 trade in felt hats to West Africa among cargoes identical to those of the slavers.[97] In some years, 30,000 hats were bartered for palm oil and elephant tusks - the 'Legitimate Trade' in which Martin Lynn felt Bristol's role was 'ignored by historians'.[98] Palm oil was used as a lubricant and in the manufacture of candles, soap, and tinplate; industrialisation provided a 'fortuitous increase' in demand.[99] Bristol's hats were carried mainly by Richard & William King, 'one of the biggest businesses to operate in West Africa in the nineteenth century'.[100] The firm's founder was John King, a major Bristol slaver 1732-1752, and a city mayor.[101]

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[97] Chris Heal, 'Palm Oil and Elephant Tusks: The Merchant Kings of Bristol', *The Regional Historian*, No. 22, Autumn 2010, pp. 14-19.

[98] A typical import cargo from the *African Queen*, 1854, one of seventeen King ships found between 1824 and 1855: 213 casks palm oil, 539 elephants' teeth, ten casks gum copal, five casks bees' wax, seven tons India rubber, thirteen tons black ebony, ten tons barwood, five and a half tons camwood, one box tortoise shell, twelve sea horse teeth (BCL, Presentments). Sea horses, or sea 'morse', were walruses. Martin Lynn, 'Bristol, West Africa and the Nineteenth-Century Palm Oil Trade', *Historical Research*, Vol. 64, Issue 155, October 1991, p. 359.

[99] Martin Lynn, 'From Sail to Steam: The Impact of the Steamship Services on the British Palm Oil Trade with West Africa, 1850-1890', *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 30, No. 2, 1989, p. 228. Possibly Kings' biggest market lay in South Wales where Britain's tin plate industry relied on palm oil as a flux. It was also a railway engine lubricant. Also Martin Lynn, *Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa: The palm oil trade in the nineteenth century* (CUP 1997), p. 86; W Minchinton, *The British tinplate industry, a history* (Oxford, Clarendon Press 1957), pp. 25, 29; P N Davies, 'The Impact of the Expatriate Shipping Lines on the Economic Development of British West Africa', *Business History*, Vol. XIX, 1977, p. 4. Palm oil's other major use was in soap making in which Bristol's Christopher Thomas and Brothers, was a major force (Martin Lynn, 'British Business and the African Trade: Richard and William King Ltd. of Bristol and West Africa, 1833-1918', *Business History*, Vol. 34, No. 4, 1992) p. 25; S J Diaper, 'Christopher Thomas & Brothers Ltd: the last Bristol Soapmakers, An aspect of Bristol's economic development in the nineteenth century', *TBGAS*, Vol. 105, 1987, p. 227.

[100] Lynn, 'British Business', p. 20. Other smaller Bristol firms included Lucas Bros & Co and Bruford, Dyer & Co (BCL, Bristol Presentments). Also, Hugh Crow, *Memoirs of the late Captain Crow of Liverpool, comprising A Narrative of His Life together with Descriptive Sketches of the Western Coast of Africa, particularly of Bonny, The Manners and Customs of the Inhabitants, The Production of the Soil, and the Trade of the Country* (London, Longman,

All of these hats for the slave trade had to be made, bought and delivered. David Richardson called the relationship between English slave merchants and their suppliers of trade goods 'a neglected field of study'.[102] A number of business archives survive, some like those of James Rogers of Bristol with considerable detail about overall investment and individual cargoes.[103] Within the Rogers archive there are invoices dealing with felt hat supplies to his slavers. These invoices show the types of hat bought, who by, where from, and the prices paid.[104] Where the supplier is identified as of Bristol origin, hats may be traced to their likely manufactory using previously compiled prosopographic commercial histories.[105]

Rees 1830; reprint, Cass 1970), pp. 254-255; Martin Lynn, 'Change and Continuity in the British Palm Oil Trade with West Africa, 1830-1855', *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 22, No. 3, 1981, pp. 331-348; David Northrup, 'The Compatibility of the Slave and Palm Oil Trade in the Bight of Biafra', *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 17, No. 3, 1976, pp. 353-364; Frederick Pedler, *The Lion and the Unicorn in Africa: A history of the origins of the United Africa Company 1787-1931* (London, Heinemann 1974), Chapter 2.

[101] TNA, E 190. During the 1810s, grandson Thomas King opened up new areas of coast, like Gabon and the Ivory Coast, known as the 'Bristol Coast'. The firm operated from Redcliffe Parade in Bristol; Thomas King owned King Wharf in the floating harbour below his house and stored his African produce in the adjoining caves (Lynn, 'British Business Trade'), pp. 21-22. *Mathew's Bristol Directory*, 1833. See plaque on King Wharf (now Phoenix Wharf) in Bristol harbour. By 1845, Kings were the second largest importers of palm oil in Britain; all the other large companies were based in Liverpool. Kings was sold to United Africa Limited in 1929, later Unilever (Lynn, 'British Business'), p. 33. Ironically, the eventual value of Liverpool's palm trade 'eventually exceeded what West Africa's slave trade had generated' (David Eltis, 'Introduction', Williams, *Liverpool Privateers*), p. xiii.

[102] David Richardson, 'West African Consumption Patterns and Their Influence on the Eighteenth-Century English Slave Trade', Chapter 12 in Henry A Gemery and Jan S Hogendorn, edited, *The Uncommon Market* (London, Academic Press 1975), p. 309.

[103] TNA, C 107/1-15.

[104] Where other documents are used directly they are cited in the text. When these hat purchases occur in years covered by the Presentments, they have been linked directly to ships and therefore used to substantiate earlier deductions on cargo sizes.

[105] Unpublished research.

For example, *Molly Snow* sailed for Bonny in the 'Bite of Africa' in 1750 to buy 'negroes and elephant teeth' for the owners, Richard Meyler & Company.[106] Among the cargo was one cask of five dozen felt hats and three men's gold laced hats at 12s 3d each, bought from Bristol hatters Charles Whittuck and Thomas Owen. The ship's accounts suggest a cargo of over nineteen dozen although some hats may have been destined for other ships:

Whittuck:	£	s	d
8 dozen of men's felts @ 13s	5	4	7
3 dozen men's coarse hats @ 7s	1	1	
Gold lace for	1	1	9
Buttons and loops	2	2	5
Owen:			
8 dozen of men's felt hats @ 13s	5	11	7
3 men's fine hats gold lace, buttons, loops @ 12s 3d	3	3	9
5 yards ribbon		2	1

An invoice of 1792 from Ricketts & Ewer to Rogers lists hats bought for the *Fame* or *Crescent*, or both, for £148 6s 4d:[107]

	£	s	d
800 Negro hats bound @ 14d	46	13	4
Binding with Tincy Lace[108]		9	
In 5 puncheons 144 hats @ 2s 6d	18		
288 fine hats bound silk with bands & buckles @ 5s	72		
1 doz Whymseys with bands & buckles @ 3s 6d	2	2	
1 doz Men's fine Beavers with bands & buckles @ 12s	7	4	
Nine boxes	1	18	

[106] BRO, SMV/7/2/1/15.
[107] TNA, C 107/5.
[108] 'The Tincy bound hats are in the Boxes No. 1, 2, 3. The bands and buckles for the Hats are in the Box No. 9'.

The beavers are top of the range; the Negro hats were the cheapest possible. The tincy lace, bands and buckles provide ready additional ornamentation. Hat cargoes two years earlier for the *Rodney*, another Rogers' slaver, allow a price comparison. Moses Samuel of London sent to Bristol twenty-four gold lac'd hats, 14s 6d each, for £13 16s, with a batch of coats, cloaks and waistcoats, together totalling £27 3s. The gold would seem to have added about 2s 6d to the price of his beavers.[109] James Hargreaves sent a collection of over fifty-seven dozen hats for £42 16s 'for ships' at Liverpool, from where Rogers also traded.[110] These were prime hats costing between 12s and 15s 9d, plus three gold-laced specials at 23s 11d, a significant premium.

The average spend per voyage on hats was £55, a 110-year spend of £115,301, an average of 0.7% of slave trade cargo costs. If related to the minimum number of hat exports to West Africa shown in the port records, the average spend per hat was 7s 11d, which seems high. If, however, the adjusted and increased figure is used, the spend was 5s 9d a hat and this is not unrealistic when a balance is struck between the basic 'negro' and the gold and silver laced hats.

Bristol slavers spent an average four to five months in port between voyages. 'Assembling a cargo for Africa was not just a test of the slave trader's patience, but also his skill and judgement, and the reliability of his sources of

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[109] 8/12/1790 (TNA, C 107/6).
[110] 6/12/1790 (TNA, C 107/6).

information about market conditions in West Africa'.[111] Several of the African traders, particularly at Bonny on the Guinea Coast, spoke 'the English language with fluency' and sent regular letters to Bristol merchants stating the 'situation of the markets, the goods which they would wish to be sent out to them the next voyage and the number of slaves which they expect to receive'.[112] Often, the captain's first-hand knowledge of the 'particular demands prevailing at the intended place of trade' was relied upon.[113] Captains not only selected goods, but travelled to purchase them, and took receipt directly on their ships. John Goodrich of the *Sarah* thought the 'cheapness of India goods will render it useless to take any Manchester' and so went to London instead, where he also visited the 'bead store house' and checked on the price of cowries, and to Birmingham for guns.[114] William Woodville of the slaver *Rodney* from Bristol wrote to James Rogers in 1790:

> I arrived in Manchester & applied to the different gentlemen here who deal in African goods & found everything bought up by the Liverpool people except a very small quantity & Mr Rawlinson who had but few goods by him except the Romals you ordered sometime since, advised me to look amongst the different manufacturers – but very kindly took the trouble upon himself & by using very great exertions he has procured a sufficient quantity for us.[115]

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[111] Richardson, 'Consumption Patterns', pp. 309-310.

[112] Thomas Clarkson, *An Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species*, pp. 125-126, cited in Paul E Lovejoy and David Richardson, 'This Horrid Hole: Royal Authority, Commerce and Credit at Bonny, 1690-1840', The Journal of *African History*, Vol. 45, No. 3, 2004, p. 375.

[113] Richardson, 'Consumption Patterns', pp. 309-310.

[114] 1789, Goodrich to Rogers (TNA, C 107/5). This correspondence is also covered in Rawley and Behrendt, *Transatlantic Slave Trade*, pp. 160-161.

[115] 29/1/1790 (TNA, C 107/9) quoted in Inikori, *Slavery and the Revolution*, p. 165. The original cottons imported from India by the East India Company were taken up by Lancashire cotton manufactures and thereafter known as 'Manchester Goods'. The names of the fabrics, like *bast*, *brawl*, *chelloe*, *cashtoe*, *nicannee* and *romal*, with many spelling variations, were retained and fill the cargo manifests of slave vessels from Bristol and Liverpool (Joseph E

This scrambling for goods was a common place, especially in the second half of the eighteenth century, and particularly with guns. In 1754, Galton in Birmingham wrote to his partner, Farmer, both Bristol men:

> We have on hand orders for a great number of guns to be supply'd in the course of this month and more orders are expected from Liverpool, Lancaster & Bristol ... this being holiday week 't will hinder us a great deal. We shall be very hard set getting locks and barrels.[116]

Most suppliers offered discounts for 'early' payment. For James Hargreaves, a Liverpool hatter, it was for 5% in six months. In 1787, William and Samuel

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Inikori, *Slavery and the Revolution in Cotton Textile Production in England*), Chapter 6, pp. 146-147, 151, 177. Anstey, The Atlantic Slave Trade, p. 10. *Basts* is 'a material for matting or hats', a Paper *Braul*, 'a blue and white striped cloth' (Nathaniel Uring, *The Voyages and Travels of Captain Nathaniel Uring*, with introduction and notes by Captain Alfred Dewar, 1726, reprint London, Cassell 1928), fn. 2, p. 29; fn. 1, p. 41. Uring records a small manufactory for white and blue cotton cloth at St Jago on the Cape Verde Islands in 1710 to sell to passing slavers because it was 'well liked on the Coasts of Guinea' (Uring, *Voyages and Travels*), p. 91. Also, S J Jones, 'The Cotton Industry in Bristol', *Transactions and Papers, Institute of British Geographers*, No. 13, 1947). By 1788, £200,000 of cotton goods were supplied annually from Manchester and its hinterland for Africa, 'employing immediately about 18,000 ... men, women and children' (*The evidence of Samuel Taylor, employed by the Manchester cotton manufacturers, Taken Before the Committee of Privy Council Appointed by an Order in Council to Consider the State of the African Trade*, 11/2/1788 (TNA, BT.6/12); C Northcote Parkinson, *Rise of the Port of Liverpool* (1952), p. 94, cited in Anstey, *The Atlantic Slave Trade*, p. 10.

[116] Samuel Galton to his partner in Farmer and Galton of Birmingham, 3/6/1754 (Birmingham Reference Library, Galton 405/1), cited in Inikori, 'Import of Firearms', p. 341. Galton was still apologising in 1792, this time to Rogers, cited in Inikori, *Industrial Revolution*, pp. 342-343, 462. Another Birmingham gun manufacturer, Joseph Grice, informed Rogers, 'It would have given me pleasure to have supplied [sundry guns] if it had been in my power. I could by no means undertake an order of that magnitude in double the time specified' (TNA, Letter, 27/6/1792, C 107/10). Farmer and Galton, Quakers, are an example of lost entrepreneurship for both men were from Bristol. Farmer and Galton produced a gun a minute through an army of specialist contractors. Galton had a warehouse in Bristol under the charge of his brother (*Bristol Burgess Books*, 'Index and Transcript, 1557-1995', Vols. 1-21, B&AFHS cd 2004). The families intermarried, Galton becoming a partner in the Birmingham gun business in 1746, putting £2,500 into the firm, a quarter of the capital. Samuel Galton handled £54,000 of slaves in America, plus possible involvement in the slave ship *Perseverance* from Liverpool. He joined a number of bank start ups and had connections to both Barclays and Lloyds, and was an investor in the Birmingham Canal Navigation Company in 1767 (Barbara M D Smith, 'The Galtons of Birmingham: Quaker Gun Merchants and Bankers, 1702-1831', *Business History*, July 1967, Vol. 9, Issue 2), pp. 132-138, 149. Chris Evans and Göran Rydén, *Baltic Iron in the Atlantic Wold in the Eighteenth Century*, Vol. XIII, The Atlantic World: Europe, Africa and the Americas, 1500-1830 (Leiden, Brill 2007), p. 157.

Rawlinson, a large cotton manufacturing firm in Manchester producing African goods, wrote to Richard Fydell & Co, slavers of Bristol:

> The credit of the place is generally 12 months but the payment for African goods has been extended much longer even to 18 months by some Houses. We allow £10 per cent on an early remittance say in course of a month and a Bill agreeable to what you mention.[117]

Evidence to a Privy Council Committee in 1788 stated that Britain had a larger share of the African trade because of the 'credit which the British merchant has with the manufacturers, which no other merchant in Europe enjoys'. James Penny told the same committee that 'our manufacturers give eighteen months' credit, and the French only six'.[118]

Ships leaving Bristol can be recognised in their records as slavers by their cargo alone, whatever the declared destination.[119] Sometimes, owners sent the goods ahead in another boat.[120] Fourteen cargoes of Bristol slavers that sailed from 1725 to 1804 were examined to discover a typical cargo.[121] Although 103 goods are included in the current sample, the items are not disparate and resolve easily into main categories of alcohol, cloths, clothes,

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[117] Letter 11/6/1787 (TNA, C 107/1, Part 1) also cited in Inikori, *Industrial Revolution*, p. 333.
[118] Evidence of Robert Norris and James Penny, Liverpool delegates, 8/3/1788, pp. 231, 356-357 (TNA, BT.6/6), cited in Inikori, *Industrial Revolution*, p. 333.
[119] Latimer, *Annals Eighteenth*, p. 89. Review of TNA, E 190, 2008-2010.
[120] In 1759, Captain Duncombe of the ship *Cornwall* received orders from his owners, Messrs Laroche and Company of Bristol, that 'for your better despatch on the coast of Africa we have sent our shallop before you with a cargo of goods to the amount of £384 4s [which] will have made good provision of negroes for you against your arrival' (MacInnes, *England and Slavery*), pp. 46-49. Shallop: A light boat with oars, sails, or both, used in shallow waters.
[121] Two voyages of the *Africa* in 1774 and 1776 are combined in their records and are used as one in the table in Appendix 42: *Cargo comparisons of fourteen Bristol slavers, 1725-1804.*

household goods, metals, ornaments, tobacco and weapons.[122] Many items stayed the test of time despite 'the quite common belief that eighteenth-century African consumers were fickle, irrational, and easily attracted to novelties'.[123] Felt hats were the second most consistently preferred Bristol good between 1725 and 1804, far outperforming the city's more famous pewter and brass wares.[124] A few high quality hats were from London, but the great majority came from around Bristol. Despite the low value of the slave trade to the city's hatters, hats were seen as an essential part of the barter basket by the slavers and their customers. Every invoice for worsted caps attributed them to Leicester. Considering Bristol's heritage, the low

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[122] There are two minor categories of building materials, and food and drink.

[123] Richardson, 'Consumption Patterns', p. 319. Curtin called this the 'gewgaw myth' (*Economic Change in Pre-colonial Africa: Senegambia to the Era of the Slave Trade*, 2 vols., University of Wisconsin Press 1975), Vol. 1, p. 312.

[124] For early pewterers, see D Hollis, *Calendar of the Bristol Apprentice Book 1532-1565*, Part 1, 1532-1542 (BRS, Vol. XIV, 1949). Lease for life, 20/1/1484, John White, St James Fair (BRO, P.St J/F/28/15). Nott, *Deposition Books*, Vol. 1, p. 139, Vol. 2, pp. 25, 35. Bristol had a Pewterers' Guild (L F Salzman, *English Industries of the Middle Ages: Being an Introduction to the Industrial History of Medieval England*, Oxford, 1923), pp. 140-143. For brass makers: Cornish ore was used in brass and copper manufacture for the West Indian trade and provided considerable employment (Anstey, *The Atlantic Slave Trade*), p. 21. The 'copper', a brass rod, was another unit of West African currency, especially in the Niger delta (HCJ, 23/4/1713); Inikori, *Industrial Revolution*, p. 468. Sixteenth century acts of parliament forbade brass exports so its use as a currency may have derived from evasions through the export of brass in an unmanufactured state (Henry Hamilton, *The English Brass and Copper Industries to 1800*, London, Cass, 1926, second edition 1967), p. 286, cites Acts of Henry VIII and Edward VI (HCJ, xxxix, p. 161). William Champion, also a Quaker and part owner of a slaving vessel, ran the Warmley copper works, east of Bristol (Joan Day, *Bristol Brass: The History of the Industry*, Newton Abbot, David & Charles 1973), pp. 58-59. Also, Rhys Jenkins, 'The Copper Works at Redbrook and at Bristol', *TBGAS*, Vol. 63, 1942, pp. 145-167; and Dresser, *Slavery Obscured*, p. 131. In 1767, Champion compiled a 'State of Warmley's Co's Stock, Debts and Effects' which included many 'Guinea' items: kettles, manillas, neptunes, rods (GA, D421/B1, cited in Day, *Bristol Brass*), pp. 90-91. Kettle: deep, straight-sided vessels with a handle but lacking a rim, made in various sizes. Manilla (many spellings): crescent-shaped ingot of copper used as currency. Negro: Length of copper rod intended to be wound round the arm or leg for decorative purposes. Neptune: shallow dish up to 2ft 6in diameter, used for salt evaporation (Day, *Bristol Brass*), pp. 169, 198-99.

appearances of sugar (3/13 cargoes), glass bottles (4/13) and woollen goods (0/13) is surprising.[125]

Iron bars	13	Tobacco	7
Felt hats	12	Tobacco pipes	7
Gunpowder	11	Rum	6
Knives	10	Cooperage	6
Brandy	9	Earthenware	6
Worsted caps	9	Pewter flagons / basons	6
Romalls	8	Flints	6
Copper rods	8	Muskets	6
Beads	8	Photaes	5
Niccannees	7	Brass kettles	5
Neptunes	7	Iron pots	5
Lead bars	7	Guns	5
Manelaes	7		

Table 3: Most consistently carried items in slave barter cargoes (13 opportunities).

The iron bar was the staple of Bristol's slave business and used as a unit of currency on those parts of the African coast of most interest to Bristol.[126] Bristol's supply of iron bar came principally from Sweden and Russia. In the first half of the eighteenth century, importer exporter Graffin Prankard, a Quaker and one-time partner of Abraham Darby, was the 'leading iron merchant in western Britain'.[127] In 1738, Prankard sold bar iron to nineteen of

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[125] 'Bristol lay in the midst of clothiers, and serges, stuffs and other woollen goods were acquired from Somerset, Devon, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire' (Morgan, *Atlantic Trade*), p. 634. 'Survivals in the West Indies today of the habits bred by the slave system, the fondness for salt cod ... the ostentatious wearing of highly unsuitable woollen clothes, a relic of the days when the woollen industry was the great British export industry' (D W Brogan, introduction to Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*), p. ii.

[126] Anstey, *The Atlantic Slave Trade*, pp. 10, 21: 'The bar was originally prized as a raw material for iron manufacture, it was an iron bar rather like a stair-rod. Its convenience of handling, and more or less standard size and composition, sometimes transferred it into a medium of exchange'.

[127] Chris Evans, Owen Jackson, and Göran Rydén, 'Baltic Iron and the British Iron Industry in the Eighteenth Century', *The Economic History Review*, New Series, Vol. 55, No. 4, November 2002, p. 646. Also, J H Bettey, 'Graffin Prankard, an Eighteenth-century Bristol Merchant', *Southern History*, Vol. 12, 1990, pp. 34-37.

the twenty known Bristol slaver partnerships.[128] In 1793, Daniel, Harford, Weare & Payne had a bar iron warehouse in Bristol's Marsh Street.[129]

Of the rest, tin was brought by sea from mines in Cornwall and added to copper and to lead from the Mendip Hills.[130] Mendip lead, hardened by arsenic, was 'considered of poor quality', unsuitable for pipes or sheets for roofing. It was, however, 'ideal for shot and bullets, produced in Bristol since about 1782'.[131] Robert Bayly & Co, lead manufacturer of Bristol sent over £150 of bar lead and shot to the *Langrishe* for Africa in 1792.[132] Isaac Baugh was a principal supplier of gunpowder to the Bristol slave trade and, in 1749, was granted permission to buy a plot at Westbury-on-Trym to build gunpowder warehouses.[133] Tobacco is deemed to be of local manufacture because of its processing, alcoholic spirits from overseas. Cowrie shells were mainly from the Maldives, and beads from Venice and Bohemia.[134]

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[128] Evans and Rydén, *Baltic Iron*, p. 172.
[129] Sale to the *Langrishe* for Africa, 21/1/1793 (TNA, C 107/15).
[130] Jones, 'The Growth of Bristol', pp. 77-78.
[131] Charles Harvey and Jon Press, *Studies in the Business History of Bristol* (Bristol Academic Press, 1988), p. 11.
[132] Invoice 12/6/1792 (TNA, C 107/15).
[133] Baugh's main business partner was a member of the Ames family, wealthy merchants and bankers (Peris Jones, *More Mangotsfield History*, Downend Local History Society, 1987), pp. 50-51. Baugh's 'gunpowder office' was 'the first door on the right up one pair of stairs' at 17, Exchange (BCL, Sketchley Bristol Directory, 1775). Gunpowder was also secured from a number of suppliers outside of Bristol (BRO, cargo of *Swift*, 39654/2). Also, B J Buchanan, 'Africa trade and Bristol gunpowder merchants', *TBGAS*, Vol. 118 (2000); 'Technology of gunpowder making in the eighteenth century; the evidence from the Bristol region'. *Transactions of the Newcomon Society*, Vol. 67 (1996); 'Meeting standards: Bristol powdermaking in the eighteenth century' in Buchanan, edited, *Gunpowder* (Bath, 1996), pp. 237-252.
[134] Dresser, *Slavery Obscured*, p. 31.

Throughout the eighteenth century a significant proportion of exports to West Africa was of foreign origin.[135] Joseph Inikori noted that British customs ledgers showed only goods shipped directly by English traders to West Africa and not goods shipped directly for the English, particularly by the Dutch.[136] His evidence for the 1650s to the 1670s suggested English trade to Western Africa depended almost entirely on the re-export of foreign manufactures, averaging between 70-86% of the total value of merchandise exported.[137] Richardson calculated that the proportion of foreign-produced goods rarely fell below one-third of total exports to West Africa and, particularly before 1750 and again in the 1790s, it was nearer and even over one half'.[138] He thought Bristol's evident reliance upon foreign supplies of essential trade goods for Africa was 'perhaps its Achilles heel as a slaving port in the long term'.[139]

Eight slavers operating between 1759 and 1793, the prime period for Bristol's West African trade, have full trade cargo lists.[140] Each list was assessed by value for that amount bought through Bristol merchants and then, within that, for the proportion manufactured in the Bristol area. Sometimes owners like James Laroche and Corsley Rogers & Son provided parts of their own cargoes. Several Bristol merchants, like Hilhouse Gettey, Peach & Pierce,

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[135] 'The English East India Company began its imports of East India cotton goods in to England in 1613' (Joseph E Inikori, *Slavery and the Revolution in Cotton Textile Production in England*), Chapter 6, p. 151.
[136] *Memorial of the Merchants of Liverpool Trading to Africa to the Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury*, 16/3/1765 (TNA, T 1/447/LA17).
[137] Inikori, Industrial Revolution, p. 407.
[138] Richardson, 'Consumption Patterns', pp. 307-309.
[139] Richardson, *Bristol, Africa*, Vol. 1, p. xx.
[140] Rogers (TNA, C 107); Southwell Papers, Vols. 8-10, 1741-1776 (BCL, B11159-61); Duncomb Papers (University of Bristol, Arts and Social Sciences Library, DM 15).

Tudway & Smith, acted as go-betweens, while others like Joseph Loscombe and Robert Bayly provided goods from their own factories. John Galton is in the lists providing Bonny muskets.

Bristol merchants spent an average of £4,591 per voyage in this period with some 42% (£1,916) of their purchases made locally. Within this outlay, the region's manufactures for these vessels ranged from 18-31% with an average local content of just 25% (£1,153) per voyage. Between 1759 and 1793, there were 881 voyages, providing an average annual spend on manufacture and process in Bristol and its hinterland in this period of £29,876.[141] Over the full 2,114 voyages in 110 years of slave trade, the total spend of Bristol merchants on cargoes was between £9-10 million, about £2½ million locally.[142] By the same method, the average annual long run spend on local manufacture, with less annual average voyages a year than in the review period, was between £24,000-£27,000; that on non-local manufacture was £49,000-£96,000. These annual spends on regional manufacture are useful income, but do not underpin the local mines and manufactories. The range of annual local manufacturing spend undermines any claims of regional dependency on the slave barter trade alone. The West African trade, which used one third of a million hats, brought about £100,000 to the Bristol hat manufacturers over 110 years, much of this concentrated in the second part of the eighteenth century.

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[141] Voyages from Richardson, *Bristol, Africa*, Vols. 3, 4.
[142] '... during the eighteenth century ... the prices of trade goods shipped out from Bristol to the coast remained relatively steady (Lovejoy and Richardson, 'This Horrid Hole'), p. 7.

A felt hat made in South Gloucestershire was sent to West Africa for each Bristol-bought slave who survived the middle passage; a contribution of 5s 2d to the joint pockets of the local hat manufacturers and their employees.

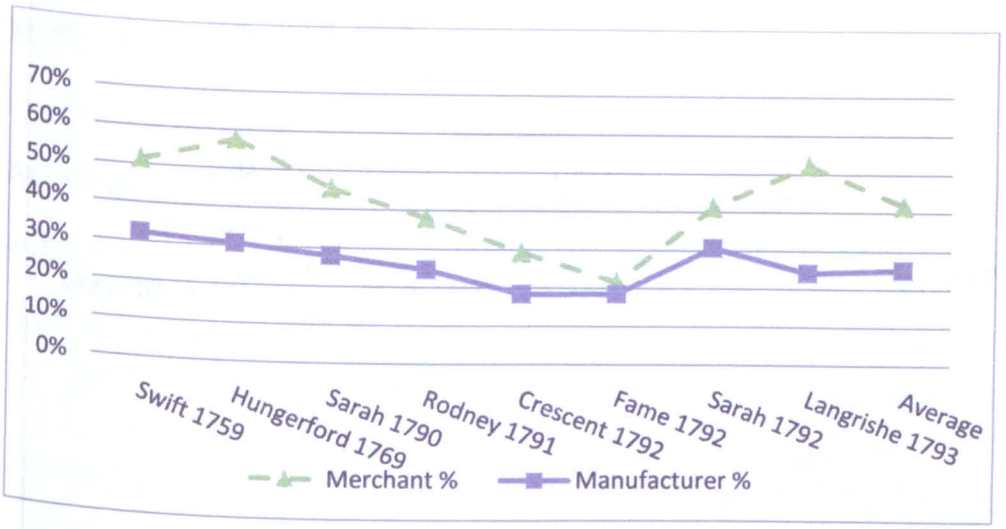

Figure 61: Bristol slave hat cargoes: Percentage by local merchants and local manufacturers, 1759-1793.

Bristol slavers concentrated on the Guinea Coast, particularly the towns of Bonny, and New and Old Calabar and, later, down as far as Angola. Most of the surviving slave cargo records deal with Bonny, 'located in mangrove swamps, infested by mosquitoes and other disease-carrying insects, and frequently oppressively hot and humid'.[143] MacInnes saw 'little law and no mercy. Attack and counter-attack, reprisal, betrayal, raids at night and murder were incidental every-day occurrences'.[144] The town was 'almost entirely

[143] Richardson, *Bristol, Africa*, Vol. 2, p. xvii, broke down the voyages for 1730-1845 as Guinea (synonym Africa) 26; Bight of Biafra (Bonny, Old Calabar) 56; Angola 27; Gold Coast / Anamaboe 12; Gambia 7; Sierra Leone / Windward Coast 6; Benin 1. He also quoted an unsigned memorandum sent to the Bristol MP Edward Southwell, probably 1743/1744, which suggested that Bristol's market for slaves [was] at Anamaboe and [the] Angola Coast (BCL, Southwell Papers, Vol. VII, Notes on Africa Trade). Three ports – New Calabar, Bonny and Old Calabar – dominated shipments of slaves from the Bight of Biafra, but the relative importance [shifted in Bonny's favour] (Lovejoy and Richardson, 'This Horrid Hole'), p. 368.
[144] MacInnes, *Gateway to Empire*, p. 195.

focussed on trade' with an estimated greater population of 25,000 in the 1790s, about a quarter the size of Bristol.[145]

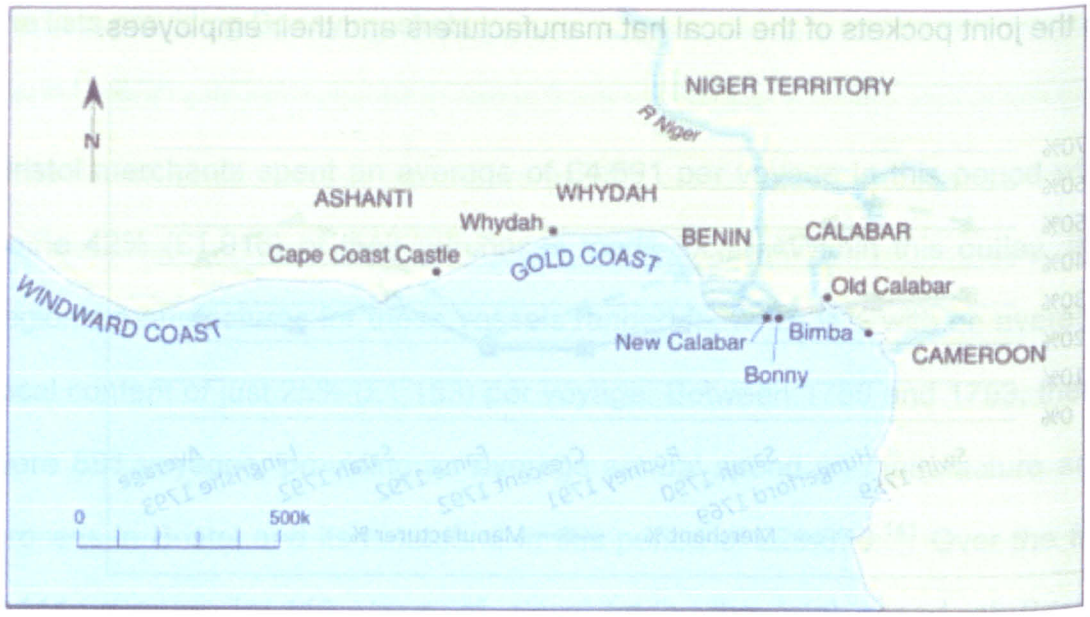

Figure 62: The West African Guinea Coast and the Bite of Benin.[146]

Crow described the dress of the kings as consisting of 'shirts and trowsers, and like all kings on the coast, they generally wear gold-laced hats'.[147] The best hats were provided with other goods as 'dash', a contemporary term covering customs duties, payment for services, and bribes. Dash quality varied to reflect the importance of the recipient. Slaver captains had to hand the lace and braid that would quickly increase a hat's status.[148] The dash book

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[145] For descriptions of Bonny town, see John Adams, *Remarks on the Country Extending from Cape Palmas to the River Congo, with an Appendix Containing an Account of the European Trade with the West Coast of Africa* (London, 1823, reprint Cass, 1966), pp. 136-137; Jackson, *Journal of a Residence*, pp. 143-144, cited in Lovejoy and Richardson, 'This Horrid Hole', p. 365. *Matthews's New Bristol Directory*, 1793-4, p. 31.

[146] Dresser, *Slavery Obscured*, p. 19, citing MacInnes, *England and Slavery*.

[147] Crow, *Memoirs*, p. 217.

[148] Early Dutch slavers decorated their VIP hats with white plumes and Spanish lace; lesser hats were black with flat crowns and broad brims (Stanley B Alpern, 'What Africans Got for Their Slaves: A Master List of European Trade Goods', *History in Africa*, Vol. 22, 1995), p. 11, citing Olfert Dapper, Naukeurige Beschrijvinge der Afrikaensche Gewestern, Amsterdam, Jacob von Meurs 1668), p. 491.

of the *Sarah* from Bristol in 1790 is particularly complete, listing the recipient, payment and purpose.[149] Twenty-six hats were given in dash, for instance, for building a sun-shade house over the vessel, and for customs, and slave sale arrangement.

Ambrose Lace gave guidance on dash to one of his captains at Whydah about 1770:

> To the Cannoe men for bringing the Captain on shore one Anchor Brandy and to each man a hatt and a fathom Cloth. To the Boatswain a hat ½ ps Cloth one Cabes Cowrees a flask of brandy every Sunday and a bottle every time they cross the Barr with goods of Slaves and every time they pass a white man and at the end of Trade for carrying the Captain on board one anchor of brandy and four Caresses Cowrees.[150]

The bulk of the hat cargos, the 'negro' hats, were used for barter, but most captains were also instructed to buy 'elephants' teeth' and hundreds of thousands of tusks were carried back to Bristol. Of the 230 hats on board the *Sarah*, 194 were bartered for slaves and ten for teeth.

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[149] Appendix 43: *The Dash Book of Sarah, 1790.* One unnamed master of a Rogers' vessel about 1787 was 'obliged to spend 25% of his trade goods, apparently at Calabar, to pay customs dues and purchase slave provisions' (TNA, C 107/15, Trade Book, cited in David Richardson, 'The Costs of Survival: The Transport of Slaves in the Middle Passage and the Profitability of the 18th-Century British Slave Trade', *Explorations in Economic History*, 24:2, April 1987), p. 187.

[150] TNA, C 107/6. Also Williams, *Liverpool Privateers*, p. 552; TNA, Parliamentary Papers, 1789, LXXXIV (646a), Part 1 (Privy Council Report), Captain Heatley, in Anstey, *Atlantic Slave Trade*, p. 20.

The local currency at Bonny was 'barr' iron.[151] In other places on the slave coast it was the copper bar, the cowrie, the ounce, the piece [of cloth].[152] These were not primitive measures, but sophisticated exchange mechanisms comparable to silver or gold bars or bills of exchange in London.[153] Goods brought from Bristol carried bar values attached to them, previously agreed with African traders.[154] In pre-sailing accounting between the owners and a ship's captain, the number of slaves expected for the bars provided was also specified.[155] On the coast, slaves were examined, the bar price agreed, and the transaction recorded in bars in slave purchase books.[156] Captain Jones, *Marquis of Lothian*, of Bristol, in 1757 paid '50 Barrs a slave after three months on the River Bonny. Captain Baille, *Carter*, Liverpool, then paid 30-35

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[151] Iron bars were also used in trade between Philadelphia and Bristol. Willday's of Atherstone, Warwickshire, shipped hats through Bristol in 1766; Willday was paid in bar iron at the wholesale Philadelphia market price on 10/3/1766 (Charles Thomson, *Papers, transcripts of correspondence of a Philadelphia merchant, the 'Old Secretary' of the Continental Congress*, Collections of the New-York Historical Society, 1878), p. 14.

[152] Anstey, *Atlantic Slave Trade*, p. 21.

[153] This is a subject of considerable academic interest. Among the most useful works are Jan Hogendorn and Marion Johnson, *The Shell Money of the Slave Trade* (CUP 1986); Marion Johnson, 'The Cowrie Currencies of West Africa', *The Journal of African History*, Part I, Vol. 11, No. 1, 1970, pp. 17-49; Part II, Vol. 11, No. 3, 1970, pp. 331-353; George Metcalf, 'Gold, Assortments and the Trade Ounce: Fante Merchants and the Problem of Supply and Demand in the 1770s', *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 28, No. 1, 1987, pp. 27-41; Karl Polanyi, 'Sortings and the Ounce Trade in the West African Slave Trade', *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 5, No. 3, 1964, pp. 381-393; Richardson, 'Consumption Patterns'. Also John J McCusker, *Money and Exchange in Europe and America, 1600-1775* (Basingstoke, Macmillan 1978), pp. 13-15.

[154] Thomas Phillips, 'A Journal of a Voyage to Africa and Barbadoes', *Churchill's Voyages* (London, 1746), vi, p. 211, cited in Polanyi, 'Sortings', p. 386. 'By 1765 foreign manufactured goods had increased greatly in price, some by as much as 100 per cent in twenty years' (Morgan, *Atlantic Trade*), p. 145. 'Peacetime wage levels seem to have remained remarkably stable during the eighteenth century ... a fluctuation of perhaps 2-3 per cent in the period 1680-1780' (Jonathan Press, *The Merchant Seamen of Bristol, 1747-1789*, No. 38, BBTHA, 1976), p. 5.

[155] For example: Cargo of *Hungerford* to New Calabar, 1769, 28,475 bars to buy 400 negroes (University of Bristol, Arts and Social Sciences Library, Duncomb Papers, DM 15/2475); the cargo of *Bristol Fly* by bars in 1786/7, 7,762 barrs for fifty-three slaves and 200 tons of rice, in Appendix 44: *Cargo of Fly in barrs, 1786* (TNA, C 107/ 1).

[156] For example, trade book of the Sarah, James Goodrich master, 1789-90, Cameroon for Jamaica, (TNA, C 107/6); Richardson, *Bristol, Africa*, Vol. 4, 1789/23, p. 157.

Barrs for 15 slaves'.[157] Captain Crow of *Kitty's Amelia* recalled buying a 'negro on the coast of Bonny for £25 worth of barter, comprising a piece of cloth, twenty-five kegs of gunpowder, two bags of shot, two knives, four iron pots, four cutlasses, four hats and fourteen gallons of brandy'.[158]

Trade was dominated from start to finish by 'practical cloth and metal goods', with a range so broad that slavers were 'floating supermarkets'.[159] A number of Bristol manifests list trade cargoes with each item priced. There are very few which contain items, prices, suppliers and the bar equivalent. This combination allows a price comparison of the goods, relative to the bar, and indicates the different values placed on those goods by the African traders. Two ships' cargoes with the full set of information are the *Swift*, 1759, and the *Hungerford*, 1769.[160] In the ten years between the ships' sailings the average price of the barr in Bristol dropped from 3s 10d to 3s 2d, reflecting the rise in slave prices.[161] Currency staples like iron bars and copper rods held or increased their position at about 100% of the bar price. Brass neptunes almost doubled in value over the period. Manchester goods – silk and ordinary romals, photaes, bafts, niccannees - were generally the most requested

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[157] Williams, *Liverpool Privateers*, p. 481.
[158] Crow, *Memoirs*, pp. 133, 147, 202.
[159] The description 'supermarkets' was used by A G Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa* (London, Longman 1973), p. 11, and cited in Alpern, 'What Africans Got', p. 6.
[160] *Swift* (BRO, 39654(2)); *Hungerford* (University of Bristol, Arts and Social Sciences Library, DM 15/2475). Appendix 45: *Barr cargo prices of the Swift, 1759, and Hungerford, 1769.*
[161] The estimated average prices gained for slaves by British slavers in the five decades 1761-1807 were £29, £35, £36, £50 and £60 (Anstey, *Atlantic Slave Trade*), p. 35. The price of adult male slaves in West Africa probably doubled during the eighteenth century, from £9 a head before 1710 to £18 after 1783, whereas the prices of trade goods shipped out from Bristol to the coast remained relatively steady. Faced with apparently deteriorating terms of trade in West Africa, Bristol slave traders were thus obliged during the eighteenth century to despatch progressively larger quantities of trade goods to the coast for each slave they sought to purchase (Lovejoy and Richardson 'This Horrid Hole'), p. 7.

group. The other prized items, averaging over 100% of the bar price for their year were laced hats, arrangoe beads, brandy and blunderbusses, although the last three all fell in appreciation over the ten years. The rank of laced hats particularly, but ordinary felts as well, again shows that hats were an important, if not vital, part of the mix.

1759-1769 Gainers by >10%		1759-1769 Losers by >10%	
Neptunes	72%	Brandy	80%
Lead bars	30%	Blunderbusses	62%
Iron bars	21%	Arrangoe beads	51%
Felt hats	19%		
Superfine chelloes	17%		
Common beads	15%		
Muskets	11%		
Niccannees	11%		

Table 4: Bar percentages of those items which appeared in both ships' cargoes, listed by their rise and fall in value (price per bar) to the African traders.

An additional concept of 'sortings' or assortment was a vital and consistent part of the trade. A slave would command not only a certain number of bars, but bars made up of goods in a to-be-agreed assortment. A captain laid out his goods and the African trader made a selection adding to the agreed bars. John Newton describes how a rival captain's superior assortment enabled him to 'bear away all the trade here from a vessel that has only a common assortment'.[162] Marion Johnson claimed 'the whole secret of the Guinea trade was to choose trade goods in such a way as to satisfy the African traders at

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[162] John Newton, *The Journal of a Slave Trader*, 1750-1754, edited Bernard Martin and Mark Spurrell (London, Epworth Press 1962), pp. 13, 24, 28-29. Also, Anstey, *The Atlantic Slave Trade*, p. 22; letter from Captain Goodrich at Bonny to owner James Rogers in Bristol, 20/6/1791 (TNA, C 107/5).

the lowest possible [combined] prime cost'.[163] 'If a ship there wants a commanding article brought by one of another Nation, the first must wait till the latter is despatched, which is often fatal to the lives of the seamen & Negroes, & renders the success of the voyage very precarious.'[164]

There was one other recourse for the trader. Thomas Bowditch, son of a Bristol hatter, travelled extensively in Ashanti where the king complained to him that 'ten handkerchiefs are cut to eight, water is put to rum, and charcoal top powder'.[165] Newton agreed that 'not an article that is capable of diminution or adulteration is delivered genuine or entire. The spirits are lowered by water. False heads are put into the kegs that contain the gunpowder ... The linen and cotton cloths are opened, and two or three yards ... cut off, not from the end, but out of the middle, where it is not so readily noticed'.[166]

Towards the end of the trade, Bristol's abolitionists were clear about the inter-dependence of the hat business and slave barter. In a mocking poster, printed about 1805, celebrating the 'expected abolition', 'valuable articles for the

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[163] Marion Johnson, 'The Ounce in Eighteenth-Century West African Trade', *The Journal of African History*, Vol. 7, No. 2, 1966, p. 198. Also Metcalf, 'Gold, Assortments and the Trade Ounce', p. 39.

[164] Memorial of the Merchants of Liverpool Trading to Africa to the Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury, 16/3/1765 (TNA, T. 1/447/LA17), cited in Inikori, *Slavery and the Revolution*, pp. 162-163. Also Edward Taylor to James Rogers, 2/7/1792 (TNA, C 107/6); Richard Rogers to James Rogers, 10/11/1787 (TNA, C 107/12), cited in Morgan, *Atlantic Trade*, p. 134.

[165] T Edward Bowditch, *Mission from Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee*, 1819 (London, third edition, Cass 1966), p. 72.

[166] John Newton, *Thoughts upon the African Slave Trade* (London, 1788), reprinted in *Journal of a Slave Trader*, p. 106.

Slave Trade were offered for sale at and under Prime Cost'.[167] Third on the list, after Negro Guns, and shackles and thumb screws, were 'About Ten Thousand Fine Gold-Laced Hats, at 10½d each'.[168] The city's hats were identified as an essential element of slave purchase.

In contrast, local manufacturers joined Bristol's merchants throughout the eighteenth century in declaring the importance of slaves to the city's wealth. Before 1707, exports from Bristol to West Africa were under £100,000 a year, but grew ten times by 1730.[169] A city petition to the Commons in 1713 noted that 'Bristolians depended for their subsistence on the West Indies and Africa trade which employed great numbers of people in shipyards and in the manufacture of wool, iron, tin, copper, brass, etc, a considerable part whereof is exported to Africa for the buying of negroes'.[170] An unpresented petition of 1726 claimed 'many thousands of familys in the citty and places adjacent imployed and supported [by slavery]'.[171] In the 1790s, merchants declared that those 'interested in various manufactures of trades which greatly depend on the African and West Indian markets look forward with the most serious apprehension to the distress it will bring on their respective trades and the

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[167] BCL, 'The Hobhouse Papers', Vol. 13, *Jefferies Collection*, B7957. Appendix 46: *Mock auction poster of slavers' wares*, undated, but about 1805 from its place in the records.
[168] This was a real sale price well under prime cost. An invoice of James Hargreaves, 6/12/1790, contained three grades of these hats with individual prices varying from 12s to 23s 11d (TNA, C 107/6).
[169] Richardson, *Bristol, Africa*, p. xx.
[170] Nicholls and Taylor, *Past and Present*, Vol. 3, p. 165. Dresser, *Slavery Obscured,* pp. 31-32.
[171] Walter Minchinton, *Politics and the Port of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century* (BRS, Vol. XXIII, 1963), p. 21.

many thousands employed therein, should [suggested legislation] pass in to law'.[172]

Thomas Clarkson, the abolitionist and propagandist, who knew Bristol well from his investigations, was having none of it.

> With respect to the manufacturing towns, there are none where the inhabitants work solely for the African trade. The most conspicuous is Manchester, which supplies it annually with goods, almost to as great an extent as all the rest of them put together. The next is Birmingham ... Nor is it likely that there would [be] a single labouring manufacturer, who would suffer by the abolition of the slave trade, so long as he was willing to work ... In the rest of the *manufacturing* towns the different branches for the African market are very small, and bear no kind of proportion to the different manufactories of the place.[173]

With regard to the 'hat' element of this debate, the answer is now available. Richardson in his listings of Bristol's slave voyages noted a heavy reliance by Bristol slave and plantation merchants upon foreign trade goods and thought this 'a little surprising in view of frequent assertions that the trade to Africa provided a vital stimulus to local manufacturing and employment'.[174] With regard to West African barter, Richardson's 'surprise' at the amount of 'foreign' produce was well founded, but not in the case of hats which were almost all produced in the Bristol region. From this narrow 'hat' perspective, too, the propagandist Clarkson was also right in pointing out that the 'different

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[172] Appendix 47: *Pamphlet against a proposed investigation by the House of Commons, 1789* (BRO, SMV/7/2/1/15/15). Petition (BRO, SMV/7/2/1/15/19).

[173] Thomas Clarkson, *An Essay on the Impolicy of the African Slave Trade: In Two Parts* (London, 1788, reprint Kessinger 2010), p. 118; author's italics.

[174] Richardson, *Bristol, Africa*, p. xx.

branches for the African market are very small, and bear no kind of proportion to the different manufactories of the place'. However, what Clarkson did not choose to recognise was the importance of Bristol's sailing ship support and supply business, the establishment of strong insurance and banking interests, the considerable benefit to local employment from new industries built around sugar and tobacco and, for the hat business, the substantial returns from supporting the plantations. The plantation trade, some 3 million hats in total, brought in about £1 million to Bristol firms, mostly between 1775-1835.

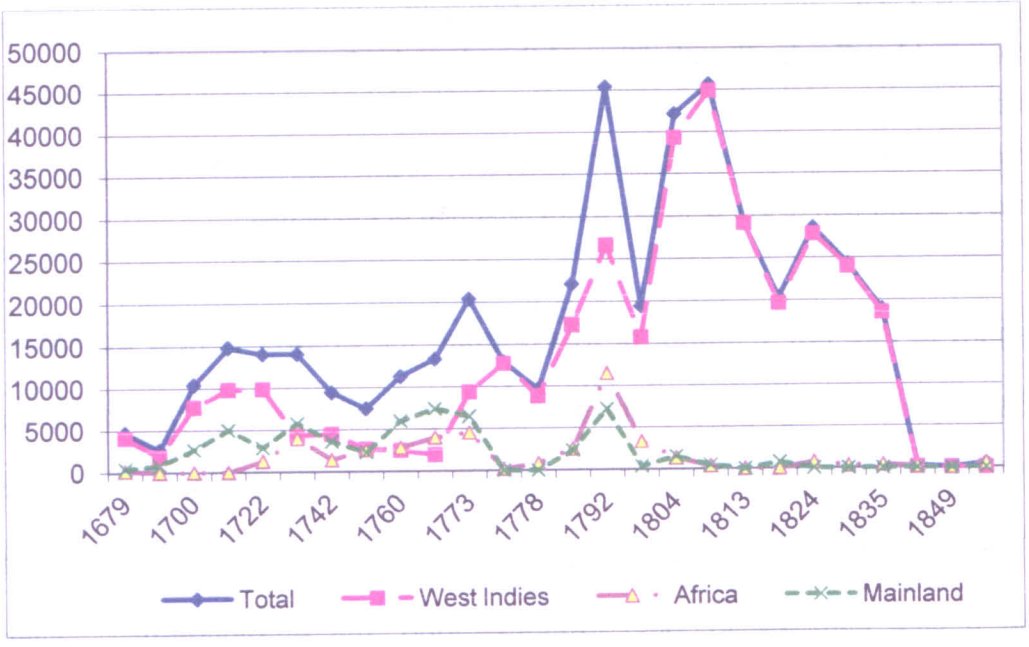

Figure 63: Numbers of hats shipped from Bristol in the slave business, 1679-1855.

Bristol's links with the plantations began before the city officially entered the slave trade.[175] The West Indies received 78% of Bristol's total slave trade

[175] Virginia probably received its first twenty African slaves on a Dutch vessel in 1619 (Benni Leemhuis, Garry Wiersema, Y B Adema, edited, *Instructions for the Virginia Colony*, 1606, University of Groningen, 1996); Conway Whittle Sams, *The Conquest of Virginia, the Forest Primeval: An Account, Based on Original Documents, of the Indians in That Portion of the Continent* (London, Putnam 1916, reprint Kessinger 2008). St Christopher (Kitts) was settled in 1624, quickly followed by Barbados, Nevis, Montserrat and Antigua (Dresser, *Slavery Obscured*), pp. 14-15. After Jamaica was taken from Spain in 1655, it received over 600,000

output: 2,329,000 hats; the North American plantations about 400,000. Within the West Indies, exports to Jamaica were dominant with 1,306,000 hats (56%) or, with the correction, 3,458,000 to the West Indies (1,939,000 to Jamaica). Jamaican trade was almost five times the size of that to West Africa. Notwithstanding these large figures, by the 1780s Liverpool was in control of both the slave and plantation trades, accounting for over 74% of the slaves and 72% of the ships arriving in Jamaican ports, including in their cargoes hats from Cheshire and Lancashire.[176] The abolition of slave ownership in 1835 quickly ended the matter for Bristol.[177]

The outward cargo to the plantations consisted of 'articles for the clothing and maintenance of white and negro, for the furnishing of their houses, the construction of their mills and distilleries and the cultivation of their lands and the manufacture of its produce'.[178] The first complete slave code was passed in Barbados in 1661, followed in 1696 by that of Jamaica which became the West Indian standard.[179] Masters were obliged to give male slaves a pair of drawers and a cap once a year.[180]

Africans becoming the 'largest single importer of African slave labourers in all British America' (Herbert S Klein, 'The English Slave Trade to Jamaica, 1782-1808', *The Economic History Review*, New Series, Vol. 31. No. 1, February 1978), p. 25.

176 Klein, 'English Slave Trade', pp. 40-41. Exhibit, 2009 (International Slavery Museum, Liverpool).

177 *Slavery Abolition Act 1833*, 3&4 William IV, c. 73 (1833) which gave gradual freedom depending on age and status through to 1840.

178 Walter Minchinton, 'The Port of Bristol in the Eighteenth Century', *Bristol Branch of The Historical Association*, No. 5, 1962, p. 3.

179 *An Act for the better Order and Government of Slaves*, 8 William III, c. 2, Acts of Assembly passed in the Island of Jamaica 1681-1737 (TNA, CO 139). Robert Worthington Smith, 'The Legal Status of Jamaican Slaves Before the Anti-Slavery Movement', *The Journal of Negro History*, Vol. 30, No. 3, July 1945, p. 293.

180 Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, p. 239.

On the plantations, custom and provision varied. One Jamaican estate manager was never allowed to 'give out woollens or hats'.[181] By 1782, blanketing and caps were sent to Jamaica as 'so very necessary for Negroes settled very remote in the mountains and subject from its situation to heavy rains'.[182] Richard Dunn said slaves in English islands wore little clothing, 'very rarely did field Negroes wear hats or shoes'.[183] The Rev R Bicknell, at first hand, described the 'most common clothing for men and women is coarse blue baize, and coarse Oznaburgh, with coarse hats and woollen caps ... they have also a man's hat each, of very inferior quality, with one of two woollen caps ... the supply is not always the same; as, on estates belonging to wealthy proprietors, and especially if they reside, they get a better allowance than where the owner is poor'.[184]

In 1788, reinforced in subsequent years, clothing provision became a stricter requirement: each male slave at the beginning of January and August was to receive 'one Jacket made of good found Woollen Cloth, and One Pair of Trowsers made of good found Osenbrig' and, if the Owner thought proper, 'a good and sufficient Blanket, and a Hat or Cap'.[185] By 1830, a hat was

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[181] 'Thistlewood Journal', *Monson MSS*, 9/8/1780 (BL, MS 18275A) and cited in J R Ward, *British West Indian Slavery, 1750-1834, The Process of Amelioration* (Oxford, Clarendon Press 1988).
[182] BL, *Clarendon MSS*, Dep. B 37, list of Island Estate Negroes, 4/7/1759-22/5/1760.
[183] Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, pp. 283-284.
[184] The Rev R Bicknell, *The West Indies As They Are or A Real Picture of Slavery: But more particularly as it exists in the Island of Jamaica* (London, Hatchard 1825), pp. 54, 57-58.
[185] *Correspondence relative to the Importation and Regulation of Slaves in the Colonies and Plantations*, 23/5/1799 (TNA, Home Office, London), p.37.

provided annually at Christmas, 'but the slaves add to their dresses from their own resources'.[186]

Figure 64: Slave men in town wearing felt hats.[187]

Slavers did bring back sugar and other West Indian products on their return to England, but the ships often returned in ballast. Only a small and occasional profit was made from this leg.[188] The bulk of the colonial products exported to England 'went out in the famous West Indiamen, ships which rarely if ever moved outside the direct two-way trade between colonies and mother country' and were twice the size of slavers with half the crew. Within this return trade was that of indigo and logwood, both important dyes for the West Country woollen industry, and equally for the felt hat industry.[189] The indigo farmer 'needed few labourers to help him crop his plants four times a year, soak and

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[186] *Statements, Calculations, and Explanations submitted to The Board of Trade relating to the British West India Colonies since 19/5/1830*, printed 7/2/1831, p.33. Osnaburg (Osenbrig) was a coarse type of plain textile fabric, named for the city of Osnabrück from which it may have been first imported into English-speaking countries.

[187] National Library of Jamaica, N/15267.

[188] Klein, 'English Slave Trade', pp. 39-40. There was little overlap between Bristol's sugar and tobacco merchants and her prominent slave traders (Morgan, 'Atlantic Trade'), p. 642.

[189] Beckles and Shepherd, *Liberties Lost*, pp. 108-110. Logwood imports were banned until 1650 when a petition by the feltmakers had the ban 'restrained' (*HCJ*), Vol. 6, pp. 426-427. Dawes, inventory 14/2/1686; probate 6/5/1687 (TNA, PROB 4/18051). Christy & Co, Cash Account, Frampton Cotterell, 1856 (CA, B/VV/4/5).

beat the stalks to extract the dye, and dry it into shiny blue gummy cakes'.[190] Logwood was taken to one of five Gloucestershire mills for chipping.[191] These two crops demonstrate a wider, figure-of-eight trade where new slaves were bought, in part, with colonial produce like tobacco and sugar which their fellow slaves helped to gather, and which was taken to England for processing, ready for the journey to West Africa after use in hat manufacture.[192]

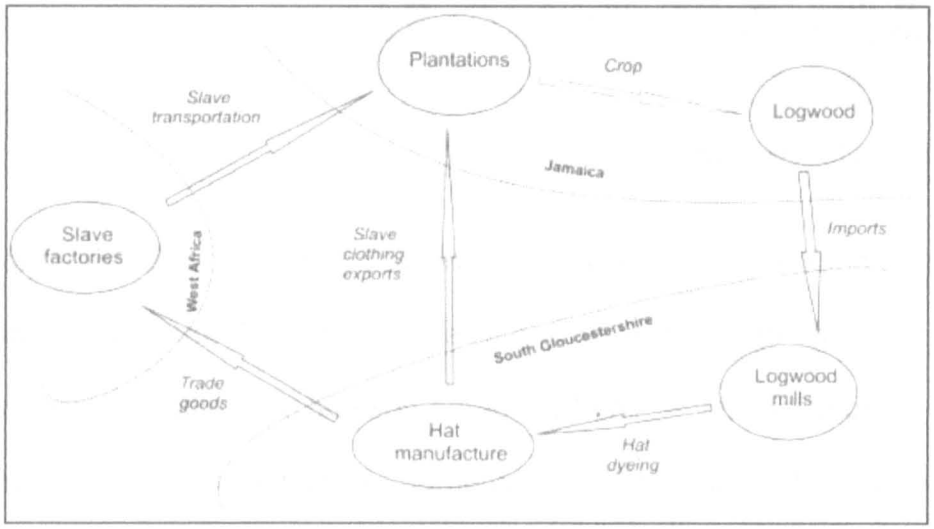

Figure 65: The 'figure of eight' slave and logwood trade.

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[190] Clarkson, *Impolicy of the African Slave Trade*, p. 17. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves*, pp. 168-169, 171, 188, 208. Christopher Jeaffreson, *A Young Squire of the Seventeenth Century*, Vol. 1 (London, 1878), pp. 188-189, 211, 322-323. Richard Pares, *A West-India Fortune* (London, Longmans, Green 1950), p. 13.

[191] 'It is ground to Powder by Mills made for that Purpose, and used by Dyers, as I am told, to give their Cloaths a good Ground and Foundation for other colours' (Hans Sloane, *A Voyage to the Islands Madera, Barbados, Nieves, S. Christophers and Jamaica with the Natural History of the Herbs and Trees, Four-footed Beasts, Fishes, Birds, Insects, Reptiles, &c. Of the Last of Those Islands*, London, Private, 95 copies, 1707, Vol 2, 1725), pp. 56-57, 183. Large areas of forest in Jamaica were raised for logwood planting; the island became the clearing centre for export to England. Logwood camps led to the establishment of the colony of British Honduras (now Belize) (Sloane, Vol. 1), pp. 82-83. Kay Dian Kriz, 'Curiosities, Commodities, and Transported Bodies in Hans Sloane's *Natural History of Jamaica*', *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 57, No. 1, January 2000, pp. 35-78. Luis Millet Camara, 'Logwood and Archaeology in Campeche', *Journal of Anthropological Research*, Vol. 40, No. 2, Summer 1984, pp. 324-328. *Copy of a representation from the Board of Trade relating to the right of the subjects of Great Britain to cut logwood in the Bay of Campeachy*, 1717 (University of Manchester, The John Rylands University Library, Foreign and Commonwealth Collection). B W Higman, *Slave population and economy in Jamaica 1807-1834* (CUP 1976), pp. 1, 12-13, 30, 212-213. Joan Day, 'The Last of the Dyewood Mills', *Industrial Archaeology*, Vol. 3, Part 2, 1966, pp. 119-126.

[192] Susan Fairlie, 'Dyestuffs in the Eighteenth Century', *The Economic History Review*, New Series, Vol. 17, No. 3, 1965, pp. 488-510.

A formula is needed to translate 'slave hats' into local employment. Some of these hats were complex with their gold and silver braid, others were plain affairs. Work was produced to order and was, to a large degree, seasonal. Slaver sailing times show departures spread throughout the year, but with a preference toward spring and autumn.[193] Trade to the West Indies was definitely seasonal. Morgan describes manufactured exports as either spring or autumn goods, with sugar and tobacco shipped after yearly harvests. The sugar harvest was concentrated in the first five months of the year while tobacco was cropped between October and December. 'Ships in the tobacco and sugar trades accordingly followed distinct seasonal rhythms.'[194] A survey of 564 sailings with hat cargoes from Bristol to Jamaica suggests that hat manufacture for the West Indies was concentrated between September and February.[195] Morgan also deduced a half-year cycle for Virginia and the tobacco plantations. 'By the mid-eighteenth century three-quarters of Bristol vessels entering ... Virginia did so in the first six months of the year.'[196]

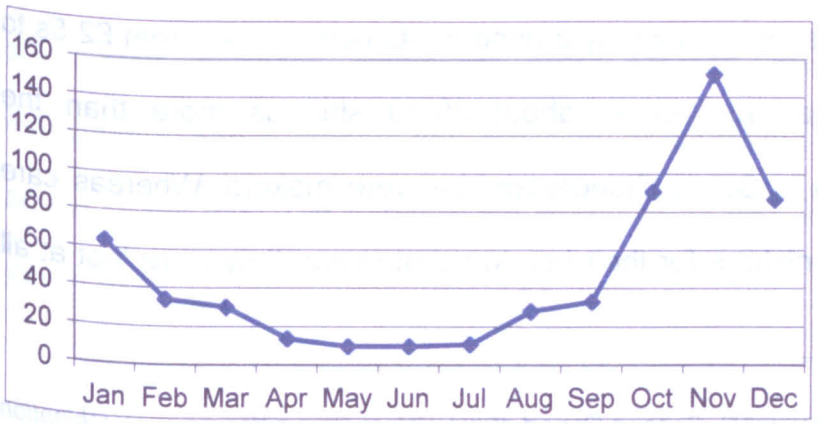

Figure 66: 'Hat' sailings for Jamaica by month, 1679-1855.

[193] A separate study agrees: James A Rawley with Stephen D Behrendt, *The Transatlantic Slave Trade, A History* (University of Nebraska, 1981, revised edition 2005), p. 156.
[194] Morgan, *Atlantic Trade*, p. 81.
[195] These months contain 82% of all sailings in the twelve month period.
[196] Morgan, *Atlantic Trade*, p. 81.

A six-day working week was expected, but between four and five days was the long-time norm in a trade beset by the journeyman hatters' notoriety 'for being fond of drink'.[197] Feltmakers were also piece workers renowned for taking time off after a few good weeks.[198] Much of their work for the domestic markets was seasonal with the heaviest work in the early months as the retailers built stocks for the spring fashions; November to January were slack. While this slack time dovetailed reasonably well with the demands of the Virginia trade, output was affected by the time of year. The working day reached seventeen hours in the height of summer, but was much less in winter.[199] An annual estimate of forty-six working weeks allows for illness, the intrusion of other business, drunkenness and intransigence.

The trade was universally split into two master processes, makers and finishers. The average week's work for a maker was no more than ten hats, eight have been allowed for winter working; for a finisher, five to six dozen. 'About 1820, finishers, an aristocracy among craftsmen, earned from £2 5s to three of four guineas per week, about 20-30 shillings more than the makers.'[200] The men in South Gloucestershire were makers. Whereas care was needed by the finishers for their London customers, they were 'not at all

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[197] Evidence of George Ravenhill, *Second Report of the Select Committee on ... Combination of Workmen to raise Wages*, 1824 (51), p. 86.
[198] Thomas Owen, letter to Beekman, 23/2/1768 (*Beekman Mercantile Papers*), p. 847.
[199] Evidence of John Watkins, Third Report of the Select Committee on ... Combination, p. 146.
[200] Giles, 'Felt-Hatting', p. 118; Robert Lloyd, *Treatise on Hats,* including 'The Laws and Customs of Journeymen Hatters' (London 1819, fourth edition, 1821), p. 39. Also the evidence of John Lang, *Third Report of the Select Committee on...Combination*, pp. 96-97; Nollet, *L'Art de Faire*, p. 23; *Report on the Petitions relating to the Manufacture of Hats*, 11/2/1752; H Whittaker, 'Reminiscences of the Felt Hatting Industry', Part 1, *HG*, 15/4/1925.

particular in passing' hats destined for West Indian slaves.[201] In the eighteenth century, there was 'no trouble in bowing the wool, and as the [slave] hats were *small laid,* they required little labour at the plank' to reduce them to the sizes required.

Man years = Total hats ÷ (8 hats a week x 46 working weeks) [368]

Table 5: Formula for hatter man years.

Adapting these approximate figures for the regional manufactories, the West African trade required 780 man years over the 110 years of the trade, about thirty men in the busiest year of 1793. The plantation trade, excluding the uncertain exports to New England, required about 7,500 man years over the 130 years of this trade with a peak annual employment of about 125 men in each of the thirty years leading to 1810. The remaining trade to Iberia, Ireland and northern America required about 155 men in the peak year of 1804. All in all about 1800, some 310 South Gloucestershire hatters were employed in the city's export trade, about a third of the available resource. Management and sales staff, finishers, clerks for order process, raw material cropping, manufacture and purchase, and invoicing, plus packers and hauliers must be added to the mix. The regional hat export trade was likely worth some 400 jobs a year.

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[201] 'There was no trouble bowing the wool, as the hats were *small laid*, they required little labour at the plank to reduce them to the sizes required, but from this cause a good deal of the *grain* must have been left in them, the most of these hats having been made for the West Indian slaves, and the persons who *habbed* them were not at all particular in passing them' (*HG*, 'Reminiscences', 1889); original italics.

Of the total feltmaker workforce at that time, about 1,000 men, incoming London firms accounted for a further 450 feltmakers leaving a satisfactory balance of 235 to service the Bristol retail and wholesale trade throughout England and Wales.[202]

Slave barter		30
Plantation supply		125
Export trade		155
Through London		450
Bristol retail market in UK	(rough balance)	240
Total		1,000

Table 6: Estimated Bristol and South Gloucestershire hatter employment about 1800.

Three Bristol firms, Whittuck's, Owens', and Ricketts & Ewer, identified through invoices in the Rogers' papers, provided hats for West Africa. Charles Whittuck became a burgess in 1749 and founded his firm.[203] The Owens, father and son, were considerable exporters, particularly to New England. Thomas senior shipped thirty-six hats in 1722 from Bristol to Barbados.[204] In 1773, Thomas junior became a partner by contributing £4,000 to a major London firm with business connections with slavers, Jamaican plantation owners and sugar importers.[205] Ricketts & Ewer made hats at 22 Clare Street with a finishing manufactory in St Peter's.[206]

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[202] Appendix 48: *Estimated local employment by London firms, c. 1800.*
[203] 19/12/1749 (BRO, *Bristol Burgess Books*, 11/11/25).
[204] TNA, E 190 1193/2, 1722.
[205] Davies, Owen, Swanton & Co, with a managed factory at Stockport (TNA, C 107/104, A dispute in Chancery over Davies's will, covering the business from 1723-1794: French v Davies). *LG*, 30/1/1773, 27/4/1773, Dissolution.
[206] BRO, JQS/P/143, 24/2/1796. The firm was connected by ownership to the Phoenix Glass Works (*FFBJ*, 29/9/1787).

Many other stalwarts of the Bristol industry exported hats to the plantations while being strong contributors to charity.[207] Charles Payne was the most extensive shipper to Jamaica from 1797 to 1824.[208] The next three groups were the Gardiner family, Dando's, and the partnership of Dowell, Dale and Ewer. John Withers shipped to Barbados; Edward Ransford sent small parcels to Nevis; J & W Bazely to Jamaica. Six of these firms were among the local businessmen who staked £35,450 in insurance on nine of Rogers' slaving ventures by eight vessels in 1793: John Dowell (£400), William Dowell (£1,200), Walter Ewer (£200), Joel Gardiner (£400), William Lunell (£400), and Charles Payne (£1,000).[209]

Charles Payne's forebears were Company members from 1663.[210] Payne occupied 12 Castle Green from the 1830s, employing thirty-five men there in 1851.[211] He had another factory at Downend, east of Bristol, which he sold in 1854 to close friend, Charles Glass.[212] Joel Gardiner was part of the Anti-Abolitionist Committee established by the Merchant Venturers.[213] The Dando family split into three branches. Their manufactory on Castle Green became

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[207] Chapter 5: *Home trade, 1600-1855.*

[208] TNA, E 190 series.

[209] Cargo and ship needed to be protected; the insuring of African ships 'both spurred on the early development of the insurance industry and drew in a wide range of investors in Bristol who were otherwise uninvolved in the African trade' (Extracts from accounts of the African ventures of James Rogers & Co in 1793 (TNA, C 107/4) and quoted in Inikori, *Industrial Revolution)*, pp. 357-358. Ships: *African Queen*, *Bristol*, *Crescent*, *Jamaica*, *Rodney* (two voyages), *Sarah*, *Swift* and *Thetis*. Appendix 49: *Insurers of James Rogers' vessels and cargoes, 1793.*

[210] BRO, 08156/2.

[211] John Winstone, *Bristol Trade Cards, Remnants of Prolific Commerce* (Bristol, Reece Winstone Archive and Publishing 1993); 1850 Matthew's Directory; 1852, Slater's Directory. 1851 Census.

[212] *BM*, 16/9/1854.

[213] 15/4/1789 (Dresser, *Slavery Obscured*, p. 149). One of Joel Gardiner's descendants is the conductor Sir John Eliot Gardiner.

so well known that unconnected businesses frequently advertised their position using it as a reference.[214] The Dandos maintained manufactories at Watley's End.[215] John Withers ran his manufacturing business with his brother George in Castle Street.[216] Descendants settled on 8,000 acres in Australia's Hunter Valley wine region.[217] Edward Ransford arrived in Bristol as an apprentice in 1751 and became the patriarch of Bristol's greatest eighteenth century hat firm. His shop was on the Pithay and one factory was in Frampton Cotterell.[218] The Ransfords travelled to America with the second Boston pilgrims.[219] They owned over one hundred slaves on their South Carolina cotton estates.[220] Towards the end of the plantation trade, Thomas Ransford sent annual general shipments to Nevis on the *Earl of Liverpool* which suggest personal support for a plantation acquaintance: the cargoes included cheese, hams, garments, 1827; wrought leather, garments, 1828; and one hat, 1829.[221]

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[214] *BM*, 28/4/1849.
[215] Winterbourne Inclosure (GA, Q/RI/161).
[216] 1841 census.
[217] www.thomasl.com/cory, accessed 2008.
[218] Ransford's earlier family was close friends with William Shakespeare's sister, Joan, who married a hatter, William Hart. The families are buried side-by-side at Tewkesbury Abbey. A pedigree of the Shakespeares and Harts is in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 11, 1816, p. 204.
[219] Also, Rainsford. The Ransfords held a farm on Rainsford Island in Boston Harbour from 1636 (Emily A Buckland, *The Rainsford Family: With Sidelights on Shakespeare, Southampton, Hall and Hart: Embracing 1,000 Years of the Rainsford Family and Their Successive Partakings in the Main Lines of National Life*, Worcester, Phillips & Probert, 1932), pp. 254-259.
[220] 1850 and 1870 US censuses.
[221] *Earl of Liverpool* was owned by the Pinney family and Nevis was, to a substantial degree, a Pinney island. The Pinney family made several fortunes through their sugar plantations and vertical trade with the West Indies (Pares, West-India Fortune). Edward Ransford junior knew Charles Pinney when Pinney was mayor of Bristol in 1832 (*BM*, 12/5/1832).

All of the regional hat manufacturers discussed in this chapter were based in Bristol; no South Gloucestershire or London-led firms are mentioned in the city's slaving records. However, the supply manufactories involved were both inside Bristol and outside at Downend, Fishponds, Frampton Cotterell, Hanham, Oldland Common, Willsbridge and Winterbourne.[222] With the significant employment involved, there is every reason to expect that the work was carried out throughout South Gloucestershire.

Conclusions

A considerable number of felt hats, certainly over eight million and felted mostly in the villages, were exported from Bristol. It was a trade that took in Iberia and a long-term business with Ireland. However, it looked primarily to service the New World and relied to the largest extent on the slave business, either as dash and barter goods for West Africa or, mostly, as subsistence and luxury items for plantations in the Americas. Within these transactions, hats were produced for the heads of kings, slave traders, plantation workers and island plutocracy. Hats formed one of the most valuable, continuous constituents of sortings and Bristol slavers would have been less competitive had hats not been available locally. The lifetime benefit to the regional hat industry of the West African trade was about £100,000, perhaps £3,500 in a peak year.[223] The plantations were far more valuable and brought in about £1 million, concentrated between 1775-1835. After abolition, Bristol became all

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[222] Prosopographic commercial histories (unpublished).
[223] Average 6s a hat.

but irrelevant in this trade.[224] In 1819, Bristol's share of national felt hat exports to the West Indies was 4% and only 2% of the total national exports.[225]

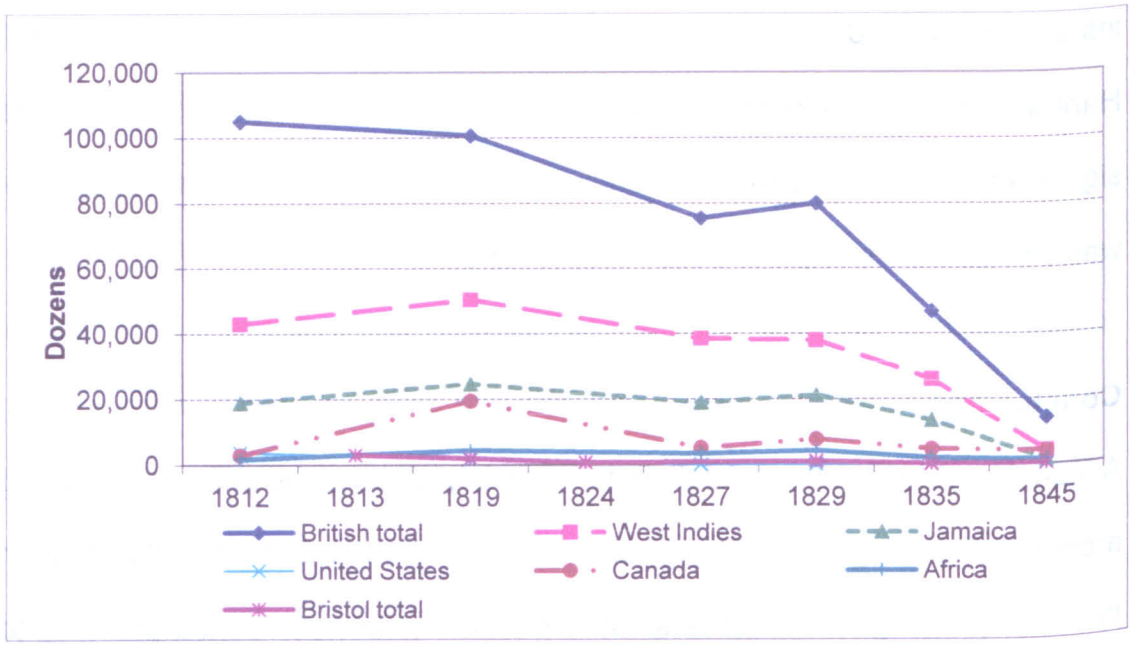

Figure 67: Destinations for felt hat exports, Britain v. Bristol, 1812-1845.

At the end of the eighteenth century, over 300 feltmakers a year were making hoods for exports and the likely total annual employment might be 400 men. The total export business was worth about £2 million. There is some evidence that recalcitrant village journeymen failed to provide necessary, consistent quality and man hours. The dramatic loss of Bristol's three export trades all occurred within thirty years of their acme.[226] The West African slave trade died because of legislation, but lingered in a tusk and palm oil business. The conventional exports to America and Canada were ousted by the growth of

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[224] Comparison between national exports (TNA, CUST/9/1, 7, 14, 22) and the Presentments.
[225] By 1835, it was 1% of both the West Indian trade and the total national trade (TNA, CUST 9).
[226] Appendix 50: *Slave and silk hats in Newcastle-under-Lyme, c. 1848* for the effects of the loss of the slave trade to the hatting industry further north.

domestic hat industries, and the gradual demise of Bristol as a port.[227] Trade to the plantations was lost to a more aggressive trading spirit from Liverpool and London. The effect would have been very quickly felt with large numbers of village feltmakers out of work. The traditional control of the Bristol hatters over their region was diminished.

Overall, the life of Bristol's hat export business was unstable and fraught. It was in part founded on clothing legislation for plantation slaves. It benefitted from two further monopolies: first, the city's historic dominance in some of the West Indian islands; and, second, legislated restrictions on colonial hat manufacture coupled with mercantile taxation. The trade was besieged by continual competition in the slave trade, from other British ports everywhere and, after independence, from new North American industries. The effects of war were almost constant and, at times, crippling. The Bristol hatters dealt with all of these as best they could, enjoying the advantages of some and, all the while, complaining, suggesting and adapting and, finally, losing.

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[227] McGrath summarised the next hundred years as a 'melancholy record' that was 'a tragic mixture of ineptitude and lack of vision that made a backwater of what had once been a great port' ('The Society of Merchant Venturers and the Port of Bristol in the 17th Century', TBGAS, Vol. 72, 1953), p. 105. Also S J Jones, 'Growth of Bristol', pp. 77-83; Morgan, *Slavery, Atlantic Trade*, pp. 90-91.

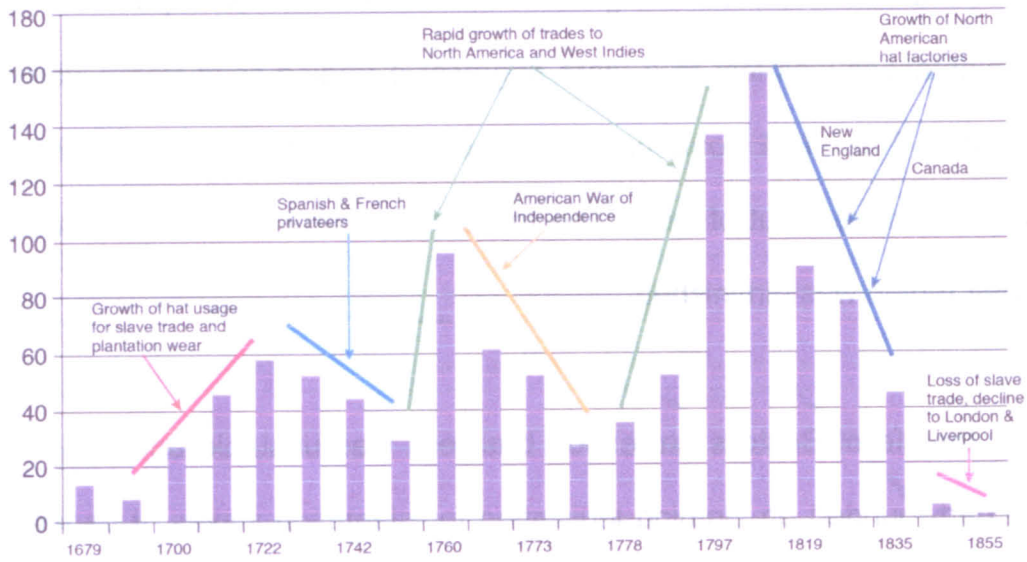

Figure 68: The ups and downs of the Bristol hatters' export trade, 1679-1855.

7 The villages: Difference, 1700-1855

This chapter examines major differences between the village feltmakers and their neighbours. It sets the scene for the three following chapters, which discuss the feltmakers' twin religions, trade unionism and Methodism, and consider the arrival of the London manufacturers around 1800.

The early concentrations of hatters lived in the centres of the villages close to fellow workers in agriculture, coal and iron mining, and Pennant stone quarrying. Feltmaking was the second largest manufacturing industry of South Gloucestershire after the rural cloth industry, both craft forerunners to widespread boot, brush, pin and shoe making in the later nineteenth century.[1] There were individual sites in the region of noisy manufacture in the metal industries, but these were isolated affairs apart from village smithies.[2] From the seventeenth century, the feltmakers made their hat bodies quietly, without machines, in a small extra workroom, often with a sloping roof, at the rear of their cottages.[3] The work space was usually separate from the family dwelling and was specially fitted 'according to the class of feltmaking to be done'.[4] Those who could not build their own *felting battery* rented space with a neighbour, where they worked independently.[5]

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[1] 1871-901 censuses.
[2] See, for instance, Day, *Bristol Brass;* Jenkins, 'Copper Works'; Salzman, *English Industries.*
[3] *Village Design Statement*, Watley's End, draft, 2012, courtesy of Tony Harding. Hill, *British Economic and Social History*, p. 24. 'The absence of any excessive noise gave full scope to the ordinary conversational tone' (*HG*, 1/7/1889), p. 334.
[4] Housley, *Development*, p. 20. One example among many, probate inventory for George Muirfield, 1694/1695 (Moore, *Chattels*), p. 153.
[5] Housley, *Development*, p. 22.

Hatters were seen as one of the best paid branches of industry.[6] There was 'some truth in this when it applied to men working in shops in the large towns in which only the best classes of hats were made'.[7] However, makers were less rewarded than the finishers who fashioned the hood bodies. Wages in body making were lower than in any other branch in the trade, the 'only redeeming feature being that the father got the full list price for the help his family gave him'.[8] Worse for the body makers of South Gloucestershire was the general low pay of the countryside. Men making cheap wool hats 'had to do the slavish and badly paid work'.[9]

Craftsmen in rural workshops had 'loyal allies in pedlars and chapmen'.[10] Pedlars increased to a 'prodigious number' after the Civil Wars and faced hostility from haberdashers for carrying 'their shops on their backs and do sell that way more than many shopkeepers do in their shops'.[11] 'Walking the length and breadth of the kingdom, selling their cheap wares from door to door, they enlarged the market for country crafts to an unprecedented extent'.[12] Pedlars may have brought other important benefits to the village feltmakers when specie was in short supply and barter took its place. New

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[6] For pay, Chapter 8: *Combination, 1700-1835.*
[7] 'Reminiscences', *HG*, 1889.
[8] 'Reminiscences', *HG*, Part I, 1925.
[9] 'Reminiscences', *HG*, 1889.
[10] Two probate inventories of 1661 for Bristol chapmen, both living in St Mary Redcliffe among the feltmakers, suggest that the men were a nuisance to the city's haberdashers of small wares. Edmond Jones had, perhaps, sixteen different goods, including a small parcel of 'Capp hudds', alongside his own possessions, totalling almost £18. John Austen with a High Street shop holding nearer thirty items was the more prosperous with an inventory at over £90 (E and S George, edited, *Bristol Probate Inventories*, Part 2 1657-1689), Vol. 2, pp. 6, 11.
[11] Thirsk and Cooper, *Documents*, p. 148. N H, *Compleat Tradesman.*
[12] Joan Thirsk, *Policy*, pp. 122-123. Margaret Spufford, *The Great Reclothing of Rural England* (London, Hambledon Press 1984), p. 4. Also, Daunton, *Progress and Poverty*, pp. 330-332.

and low quality felt hoods may have changed hands for clothing and cooking goods. 'Men as march with fote packes ... owe to buy al maner of peny ware, also pursys, knyves, gyrdlys, glassys, hattes, or odyr peny ware ... and farthing ware'.[13] In addition, 'the rabbit or hare went into the countryman's pot and the skin was saved up for the pedlar' and the pedlar's market was likely the currier or feltmaker.[14]

> What lacke you? what buy you? any good pinnes,
> Knit caps for children, biggens and waffes?
> Come let us bargaine, bring forth your Conyskins.[15]

Figure 69: A chapman collects his stock from a shop, c. 1685.[16] A pedlar with second-hand hats, 1711.[17]

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[13] *The Noumbre of Weyghtes* (MS Cotton. Vesp. ix, fifteenth century), fn. 97, cited in S Thrupp, 'The Grocers of London, A Study of Distributive Trade', in Eileen Power and M M Postan, edited, *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century* (London, Routledge 1933), p. 281.

[14] Davis, *Shopping*, p. 240.

[15] *The Pedlars Propehcie* (1595, reprint Malone Society, OUP, 1914), lines 649-651. Coneys were young rabbits; later, the term became generic.

[16] Shopkeeper, customer, chapman and debt book (Illustration to a ballad, *A caution for scolds*, c. 1685), found in Spufford, *Reclothing*, frontispiece.

In times of heavy work, the hatter's whole family, women and children, were engaged.[18] Feltmakers, in their tight communities, expected their children to stay nearby and so 'must find work and housing for them somewhere'.[19] Finding work meant sons apprenticed as of traditional right into the craft, and a chosen son, not necessarily the eldest, destined to receive the tools and stock of the trade.[20] Surplus money was readily spent on additional cottages to prepare for children's shared inheritance. When housing was needed, and freeholds or rents were not available, cottages were built speculatively on the edges of the waste land.[21] This planned encroachment, enabled by earning a living outside of any subsidiary revenue from the land, was 'particularly characteristic of the putting-out areas'.[22]

As the hatters moved to the commons, a distance away from the old village centres, enclaves were formed that set these families apart. The trade's attitudes to and experiences of apprenticeship, box clubs, combination, crime, health, housing, landed gentry, migration, mobility, pedlary, poverty, religion and, not least, work, gave these illegal centres a local identity. The families

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[17] 'Cries of London' (1711) in Spufford, *Reclothing*, figure 27.
[18] Housley, *Development*, p. 24.
[19] Thirsk, *Rural Economy*, p. 229.
[20] Moore, *Goods & Chattels*; E and S George, edited, *Bristol Probate Inventories*, Part 1 1542-1650, Part 2 1657-1689, Part 3 1690-1804 (BRS: Vol. 54, 2002; Vol. 57, 2005; Vol. 60, 2008); and the original records (BRO, Series 42203 and microfilm). Grassby, *Kinship and Capitalism*, p. 384.
[21] The practice of the churchwardens and overseers building 'Places of Habitation' for the sole use of 'poor impotent people' was already allowed, providing the Lord of the Manor agreed (43 Elizabeth, c. 2 (1601)); (*HCJ*), pp. 962-965.
[22] Pat Hudson, 'From manor to mill: the West Riding in transition', *Manufacture in town and country*, Chapter 5, p. 129.

became closely intermarried.[23] The places of worship of an increasingly challenged established church were distant; the lords of the manor mostly absent from day-to-day affairs.[24] Traditional parish restraints slackened and the shadows of spire and 'big house' did not loom so large.[25]

There was some indifference to observing the limitation to two apprentices.[26] The country journeyman, besides his own sons, often took more than two other apprentices with no concern about civic ordinances or city trade restrictions. It was the 'little masters without journeymen in the country', who kept up the supply of apprentices for the trade.[27] In village feltmaking, a poor trade, a premium was seldom demanded and, when it was and then declared for tax, it averaged under £10 with just a few reaching £20.[28] What is suggested by these village premiums is a slump from 1760 until about 1785 followed by a rise in the trade's attractiveness with the arrival of the London manufactories.[29]

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[23] A study of the 1841 census for Watley's End found twenty-two consecutive homes, with seventeen different surnames, each blood related one to another.

[24] Kenneth Morgan, *John Wesley in Bristol*, No. 75, BBTHA, 1990, p. 7. Patrick Palgrave-Moore, *Understanding the History and Records of Nonconformity* (Norwich, Elvery Dowers 1987), p. 11.

[25] Robert F Wearmouth, *Methodism and the Working-Class Movements of England 1800-1850* (London, Epworth 1937), p. 217. A D Gilbert, *Religion and Society in Industrial England, Church, Chapel and Social Change 1740-1914* (London, Longman 1976), p. 107. Marjorie Blay, 'John Wesley and Methodism', available www.historyhome.co.uk, accessed 2007.

[26] Based on the 235 surviving village apprenticeship indentures (BRO, parish records, Bitton, Frampton Cotterell, and Westerleigh).

[27] Giles, 'Felt-Hatting', p. 122, citing additional manuscripts BL 27,799/81, 27,800/80, ff. 129, 130.

[28] The first declared village apprenticeship premium was in 1712 when Roger Gregory, a Westerleigh yeoman, paid £5 for the training of his son, Samuel, by Richard Edwards, a feltmaker in Rangeworthy (TNA, IR 1/42).

[29] TNA, IR 1/54-71. See Chapter 9: *London factories, 1755-1855.* Dunlop speculates that 'probably wealthy merchant companies in the provinces received premiums with their apprentices' (Dunlop, *Apprenticeship*), pp. 201-202.

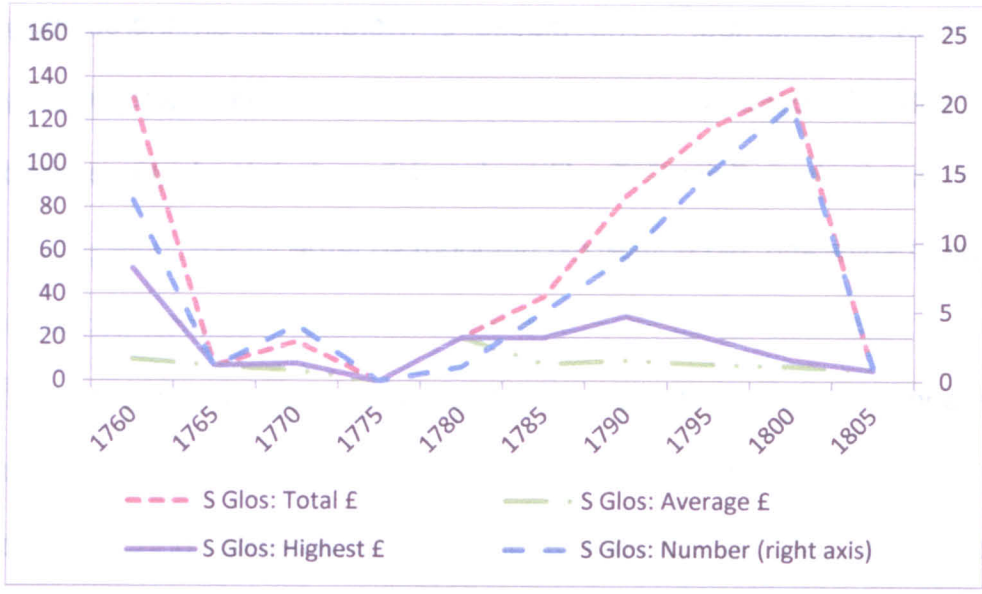

Figure 70: South Gloucestershire apprenticeship premiums in the hat trade in five-year periods, 1760-1804.[30]

The majority of premiums after 1775 were paid in Bristol by 'small masters' from the villages who would be more attractive than individual family journeymen to parents seeking to place their sons in a growing trade. Eleven masters between 1760-1805 chose to pay their premiums in Gloucester and this, perhaps, signifies a limited supply trade to that city.[31] The importance and prosperity of the hat trade in Bitton around 1800 is apparent, particularly with the Hicks and Short families. These two family names, with twenty-eight and forty-six individuals identified from Bitton in the trade, provided almost 10% of all trade premium registrations outside London between 1795-1804.[32]

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[30] Compare with the fewer, but much higher, premiums paid in Bristol in Chapter 5: *Home trade, 1600-1855.*

[31] TNA, IR 1. Gloucester's feltmaker training had almost disappeared by 1740 and the city's haberdashers would seek a nearby source in either South Gloucestershire or in South or West Wales (Barlow, *Gloucester Register, 1701-1834*, Vol. 25). Appendix 18: *Feltmaker apprentice enrolments, 1541-1855.*

[32] TNA, IR 1/68-71.

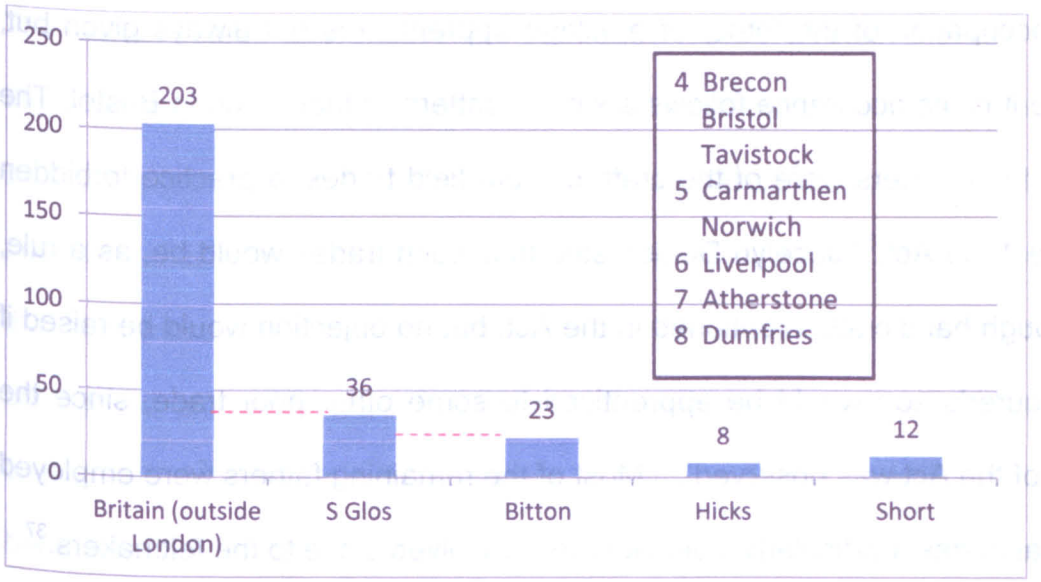

Figure 71: Apprenticeship premiums in the hat trade declared for taxation, 1795-1804. Only eight towns outside South Gloucestershire were taxed on four or more premiums over the ten years; of these, Atherstone, Brecon, Carmarthen and Dumfries were feltmaking centres.

The apprentice boys were children of neighbours from the village where they were apprenticed or from a home within ten miles.[33] In stark contrast, Bristol's feltmaker apprentices came from a much wider, albeit largely regional, area.[34]

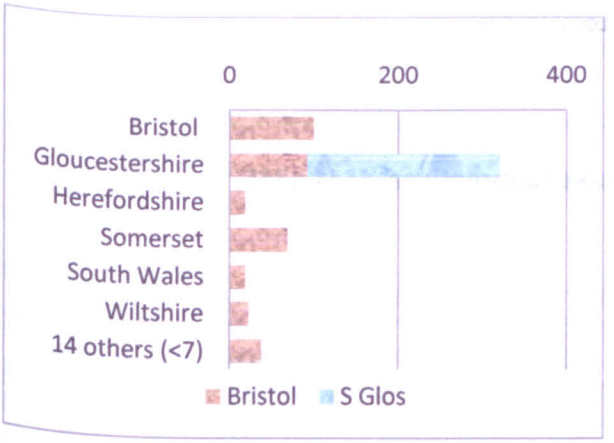

Figure 72: Numbers of feltmaker apprentices by home area, 1541-1855: those of Bristol originate from across the region while those working in South Gloucestershire all come from within the village area.

[33] Parish, apprenticeship, probate and legal records (BRO, GA, TNA).

[34] In a study of Bristol's early apprentices in the fifty years from 1675-1726, 47% of apprentices were drawn from the city with 75% of the remainder from local counties (J R Holman, 'Apprenticeship as a Factor in Migration: Bristol 1675-1726', *TBGAS*, Vol. 97, 1979), pp. 85-92. Also, Yarbrough, 'Origins'.

The occupation of the father of a village apprentice is not always given but, where it is, its occurance follows a similar pattern to that found in Bristol. The majority of fathers were of the craft, or from field trades, a practice forbidden by the 1563 Act.[35] Jocelyn Dunlop said that 'such trades would be, as a rule, the rough handicrafts mentioned in the Act, but no objection would be raised if a labourer's son would be apprenticed to some other poor trade, since the spirit of the Act was observed'.[36] Most of the remaining fathers were employed in local trades, particularly cloth workers, who lived close to the feltmakers.[37]

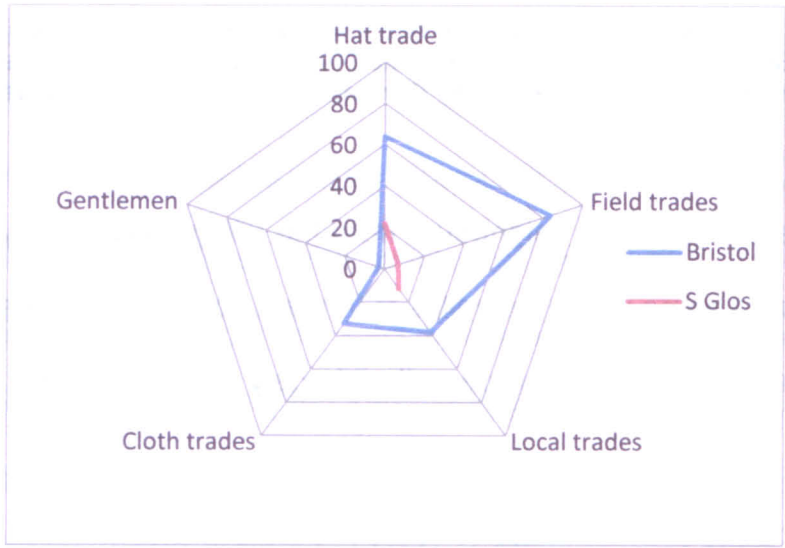

Figure 73: Fathers' occupations of feltmaker apprentices, 1541-1855.

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[35] The Statute of Artificers laid down a series of restrictions on who could become an apprentice; this varied by trade, by place (village or large town); and by father's income. The broad intention was to keep agricultural workers on the land, and to provide military resources; one of the results was to help establish an English middle class in the towns (Merson, *Southampton Apprenticeship*), pp. x-xi; (Dunlop, *Apprenticeship*), pp. 43-44, 136. Also Lane, *Apprenticeship*, pp. 2-7.

[36] Dunlop noted that the rule 'was undoubtedly broken, for it is possible to find many instances of apprenticeship contrary to the Act, especially in later years ... In Bristol a certain number of labourers' sons were apprenticed throughout the seventeenth century' (*Apprenticeship*), p. 138.

[37] A few gentlemen's sons joined the larger, well-established hatting houses in Bristol.

The rate of village apprenticeships increased rapidly through the first half of the eighteenth century.[38] This surge, while reflecting on the one hand continuing growth in the acceptance of the felt hat by the working man, also possibly reflects the influence of the 1691 Settlement Act. This act decreed that apprenticeship was a 'means of gaining a settlement ... and hence was considered alongside the other heads of settlement in examinations upon chargeability'.[39] This, in turn, suggests that village apprenticeships may have been in existence long before, but previously there was no requirement, and therefore no attempt, to place them in parish records. By 1725, the number of annual recorded feltmaking apprenticeships in the villages, likely an under-representation, outstripped those of Bristol. In the eighteenth century, when feltmaking was the largest village employer, many pauper boys were put to apprenticeship.[40] The records include 14% pauper feltmaker apprenticeships, their masters receiving on average three guineas from the parish.[41]

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[38] Found village apprenticeship records begin in 1680 with Samuel Ponting, son of Edward, a cordwainer of Westerleigh, assigned to Giles Atkins, a feltmaker of the same village.
[39] 3 William and Mary, c. 11. Snell, *Annals*, p. 232. Chris Minns and Patrick Wallis, *Rules and Reality: Quantifying the Practice of Apprenticeship in Early Modern Europe*, Working Papers No. 118/09, March 2009, Department of Economic History, London School of Economics, p. 4.
[40] *An Act for the Relief of the Poor*, 43 Elizabeth, c. 2 (1601); *An Act for the better Explanation and supplying the Defects of the former Laws, for the Settlement of the Poor*, William and Mary, c. 11 (1691).
[41] Vagrant children could be compulsorily apprenticed under 27 Henry VIII, c. 25 (1536) and 1 Edward VI, c. 3. Power to act for poor children was given in 1601 to churchwardens and overseers under the *Relief of the Poor Act, 43 Elizabeth, c. 2.* Later use of the apprentice system by Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor to provide protection and a future for poor children and orphans was extensively exercised in the South Gloucestershire villages and, because this was a prominent feltmaking area, many of the over 200 country apprentices with records in the BRO are for feltmakers, for example, P.FC/OP/5 Frampton Cotterell, and P.W/OP/15 Winterbourne and Oldland Common.

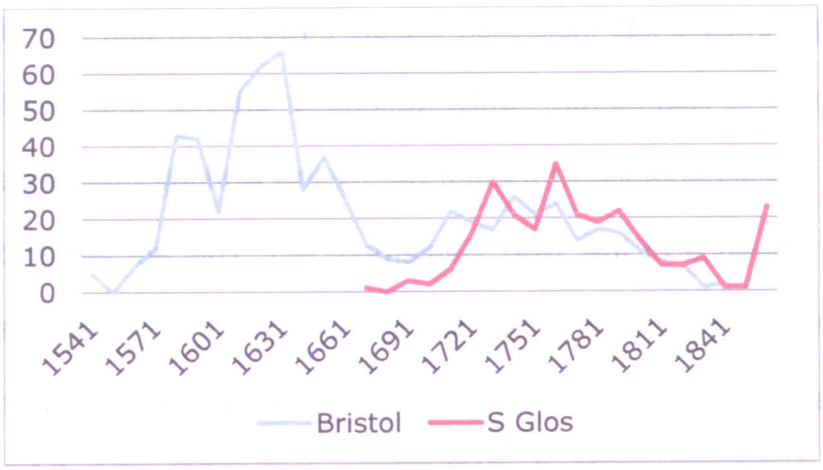

Figure 74: Found feltmaking apprenticeships, 1541-1855.[42]

Just over 50% of the 400 settlement requests shown in limited records sought a transfer from one hatting village to another, but only eight came from bordering Somerset and Wiltshire. Twenty-four (12%) were journeymen feltmakers or hatters and only three of these were from outside Gloucestershire.[43]

The most complete set of records with evidence of settlement claims are In Westerleigh; rights from apprenticeship dominated these 195 examinations. Explanations given by journeymen hatters suggest a workforce moving locally because of work or marriage and not directly because of need or an anticipation of need.

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[42] The graph is based on 235 village apprenticeships, mainly from surviving parish registrations from Bitton, Frampton Cotterell and Westerleigh (93%), and from individual indentures. Brooks reports that 'in 1699, it was noted that the judges had stated they would never extend the Statute of Artificers to villages' (*The E[nglish] R[eports]*, Vol. 86, 1 Modern 26, 1908), Chapter 2, p. 54.

[43] Berkshire, Derbyshire and Surrey (BRO, P.W/OP/4, 6, 7).

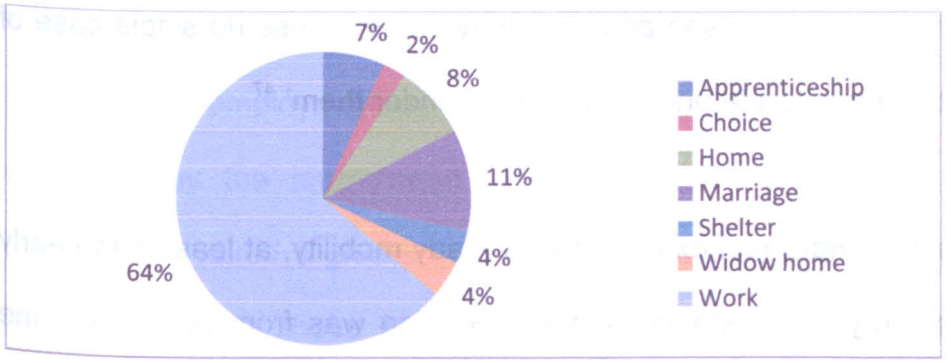

Figure 75: Westerleigh: Reasons for settlement request, 1654-1829.

However, protecting a village against unnecessary risk remained important. The examination in 1811 in Westerleigh of George Hibbs, an illiterate feltmaker, as he applied to work in the parish was typical. Hibbs said he was born in Winterbourne where his parents were legally settled. About age fourteen, he was apprenticed there by indenture to Obadiah Maggs for seven years.[44] A feltmaker like John Amos, a successful worker in Newbury, Berkshire, was in danger of being removed to Westerleigh, where his settlement lay through apprenticeship, unless that parish accepted its long-term responsibilities in writing.[45] Dunlop suggested that 'in these delicate balances between skill provision, settlement, poor law and other factors, a parish would usually suffer if it failed to train. And when it *did* train, it was reasonably sure that significant numbers of those trained would stay locally, for the essential tie between apprenticeship and the settlement system virtually guaranteed this without much compromising the freedom of artisan movement'.[46] Sidney and Beatrice Webb decided that the settlement laws

[44] BRO, P.W/OP/6/100.
[45] BRO, P/W/OP/4/36, undated. Appendix 51: *Settlement request for John Amos, undated.*
[46] Dunlop, *Apprenticeship*, p. 312, author's italics.

hardly incommoded the artisan and that 'they came across no single case of an eighteenth-century trade unionist removed under them'.[47]

There are regular individual examples of a ready mobility, at least in the early nineteenth century. For instance, Vincent Gearing was from Southwark, the feltmaking centre south of the Thames, but was apprenticed to feltmaker George Short in Bitton in 1807.[48]

Outside the corporate towns, where the issue of citizenship did not apply, 'no system of registering every apprentice's indenture existed, despite occasional proposals to establish one'.[49] The villagers knew they would never become burgesses, but journeymen or, later perhaps, as they did not require large capital for initial investment, small hat masters.[50] Journeymen accepted instead settlement rights and membership of the local box club or combination which gave them employment, security, employment and the opportunity to tramp for work.[51]

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[47] '... and a large collection of certificates of settlement from Newark records no single mason, printer or brushmaker ... and only one hatter and currier over more than a century' (Sidney and Beatrice Webb, English Poor Law History), I, p. 336, quoted in E J Hobsbawm, 'The Tramping Artisan' in *Labouring Men: Studies in the History of Labour* (London, Weidenfeld and Nicholson 1964), p. 38, cited in Snell, *Annals*, p. 232.
[48] BRO, P.B/OP/7(c), 28/11/1907.
[49] Dunlop, *Apprenticeship*, pp. 74-75; Davies, *Enforcement*, pp. 191-192, 206-07, 224. Also cited in Patrick Wallis, 'Apprenticeship and Training in Premodern England', *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 68, Issue 03, September 2008, p. 835.
[50] Ben-Amos, 'Failure', pp. 153-154.
[51] R A Leeson, *Travelling Brothers: The six centuries' road from craft fellowship to trade unionism* (St Albans, Allen and Unwin 1979), pp. 16-19.

Village employment in the hatting industry grew to almost 750 men in simultaneous employment by the early nineteenth century.[52] This workforce, quantified by the journeymen listed in parish records, and in the first censuses, required a greater number of apprentices than those found in the surviving records. These 'extra' men were apprenticed outside city, parish or county registration.[53] A trained and continuous village workforce of 750 men, each with a working life of an estimated twenty-eight years after apprenticeship, requires an annual supply of about twenty-seven youngsters and, with emigration, illness and death, the number would be higher. Some of the work opportunity was taken by incomers, but the flow from outside of the county was slight. The highest number of apprentices noted by the parish is thirty-five for the decade from 1761. Only one was found for the decade from 1841 at a time when there were fifty journeymen in Watley's End alone. In the figure below, the missing registrations are shown by a line increased four times above the peak discovery, chosen more for graphical effect than for accuracy, for an increase of twenty times would be nearer the mark.

[52] 1841 census. Compilation from parish records.
[53] Gloucestershire Quarter sessions (GA, D/1070).

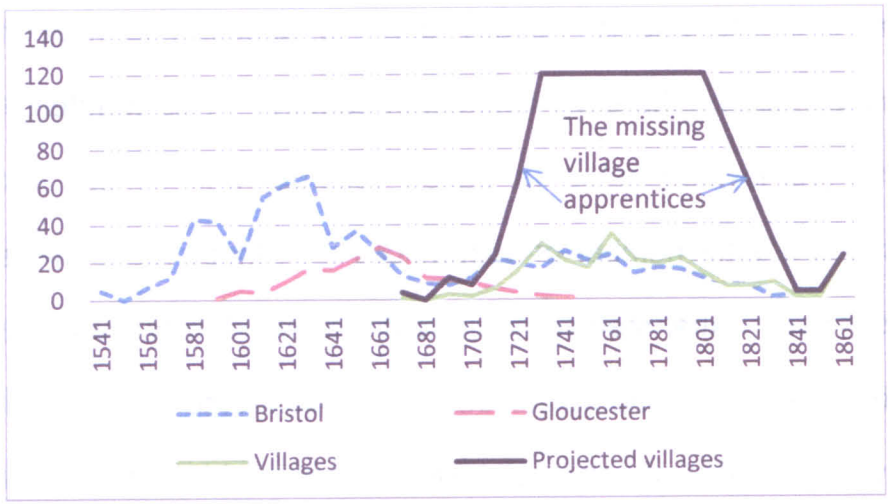

Figure 76: Gloucestershire feltmaker apprentices with village projection.[54]

The independent organisation in the villages ready to manage apprenticeships was the hatters' own combination. One significant document provides an answer to the lost registrations. Dated 1810, it is a handwritten certification on unheaded paper:

> All whom it may or shall Concern that Joseph Harding hath served the full end term of seven years to his said Master Aaron Short being fully ending and Completed from the day and date hereof in the County of Gloster in the parish of bitton.

The sheet is signed by Short and twelve others, nine of them illiterate, all senior hatters of the parish.[55] By its language, style and lack of municipal role, this certificate would be Harding's 'union' blank, the document that gave him the benefits of a completed apprenticeship.

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[54] For comparison, the Gloucester feltmakers are included; they follow the rise and fall of Bristol, but at a time-delayed and lower level (Barlow, *Gloucester Registers*).
[55] BRO, 28/4/1810, P.B/OP/7d.

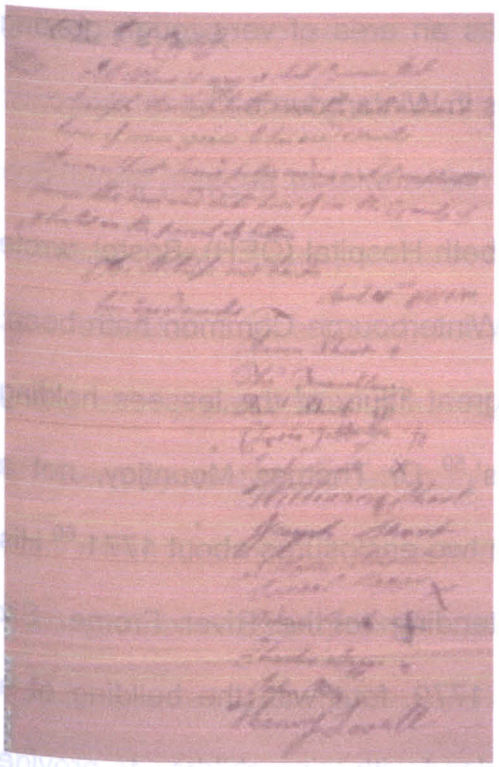

Figure 77: Completion certificate of Joseph Harding, 1810.

Encroachments, particularly by squatters, were common after the middle of the eighteenth century, and 'perhaps were not unwelcome where additional labour was needed on the farms or in local industries'.[56] Squatters from nearby parishes, or possibly the younger sons of resident small farmers and cottagers, were 'attracted by opportunities for employment in ... a local rural craft'.[57] The encroachments in hatter villages were at the margins of common or waste land. The 'unredeemed waste, not yet taken into cultivation' often attached to corresponding waste belonging to the next parish as between Frampton and Watley's End Commons. Whether cow pasture or horse

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[56] W E Tate, 'Gloucestershire Enclosure Acts and Awards', *TBGAS*, Vol. 64, 1943, p. 35. Jones, 'Agricultural Origins of Industry', pp. 62-63, gives more examples: the nailers of Rowley Regis; needle makers at Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire; framework knitters around the edges of Sherwood Forest.

[57] G E Mingay, *Parliamentary Enclosure in England, An Introduction to its Causes, Incidence and Impact, 1750-1850* (Harlow, Longman 1997), p. 13.

common, the greater part of the waste was an area of very rough grazing dotted with numerous sand or gravel pits, as in Winterbourne.[58]

In 1779, the Governors of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH), Bristol, wrote to their agent that 'a considerable part of Winterbourne Common hath been, and is now about to be, enclosed to the great injury of the lessees holding lands in that parish under the Governors'.[59] Dr Thomas Mountjoy, not a labourer or craftsman, led the invasion with two enclosures about 1771.[60] His second bite took almost thirty acres extending to the River Frome. Six encroachments by others occurred about 1779, four with the building of a cottage or garden by feltmakers: Isaac England with 'nine children to provide for and a very hard-working industrious man'; hatter Isaac Maggs and leased to William Woolan; hatter John Sergeant; and the home of feltmaker Sidenham Hollister. Feltmaker Obadiah Maggs had taken two strips making the road 'too narrow'; and [Robert] Tucker five acres and, separately two acres, and let to Samuel Baker for £16 'in advance for four years' crops'.[61]

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[58] W E Tate, *The English Village Community and The Enclosure Movements* (London, Gollancz 1967), p. 38.
[59] BRO, 33041/BMC/12/2. 'This action was taken by freeholders and occupiers because the manorial lordship of Winterbourne had largely ceased to exist after the 1770s' (John Moore, private 2012).
[60] Mountjoy was a surgeon noted throughout the country for his 'knowledge of and success in curing weakly and rickety children and ruptures'. Buried 1797 (Plaque, Winterbourne Parish Church).
[61] Baker asked the freeholder committee not to destroy the fence, presumably in fear of free-grazing livestock as 'he having a fine crop of wheat thereon'.

Occupation was so serious in 1789 that an Encroachments Committee of freeholders and occupiers surveyed and listed nineteen intrusions.[62] The committee pledged to take action on 'all such enclosed pieces as within the space of sixteen years past have been taken in'. Thomas Hollister, a Watley's End feltmaker, built a house, *hattery* and large walled garden. He was 'forbid going on' by the freeholders. Hollister agreed to pay £35 for his plot, with another payment to the 'attorney or steward' for the lease. Neither sum was paid when the committee reported that the house was 'nearly finished'. Among other encroachments was Emanuel Evans 'at the schoolhouse, who had taken in a house, garden and a sweep of ground before the door'.

For the QEH governors, this was only ever about money. There was little stated concern for the rights of common through grazing and forage. The squatters could stay if they were prepared to pay for their use of the land, and additionally for a lease.[63] These were all careful encroachments by professional men and industrious craft and farm workers who were, importantly, of local origin. There was an ordered nature and permanency about the housing and gardens of those feltmakers who squatted. Tate talks of a 'small part of a garden' to 'a neat cottage with stable, piggery and garden,

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[62] 27/2/1789 (BRO, 33041/BMC/12/2).

[63] The agents were told to take down the fences for the 'mutual and accustomed advantage of the freeholders and lessees having right of Common'. Eight men took 1¼ days and were paid 18s 1½d to do the work, 23/12/1779 (C H B Elliott, *Winterbourne, Gloucestershire: The History of Winterbourne, Winterbourne Down, Hambrook, and Frenchay*, 1936, reprint, The Frenchay Tuckett Society 1999), pp. 59-62. H W N Ludwell, *A Brief History of Winterbourne* (Private pamphlet, 1967), digital reprint without page numbers.

well fenced in'.[64] The general demeanour was peaceful.[65] For the Winterbourne villagers, this was a 'landscape of busy-ness' where, 'above all, squatters were craftsmen providing for growth and enrichment in the community'.[66] When enclosure came forty years later, 'rather than have valuable houses and farm buildings pulled down the Commissioners sought agreement between the parties on suitable exchanges or compensation'.[67] In the meantime, squatters could always be fined annually for encroachment.[68] It was a far cry from the squats seen as 'seldom or never the abode of honest industry, but serve for harbour to poachers and thieves of all descriptions'; nor 'by origin, a separate class ... outside of the original village economy ... an aboriginal poor man, a poor alien'.[69]

The timing of these encroachments with spurts from the feltmakers around 1779 and 1789 is interesting. This enlargement of community housing is appropriate at a time of rapid village growth and purpose-built housing.[70] The

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[64] The cottage as 'the first comfort of a labouring man' (Rudge, *General View*), pp. 343-344. In 1800, he said new cottages were built sixty feet long with sixteen feet high walls. There were five rooms, a lower 12 x 12 ft 4 in, pantry 5 x 12 ft, two bedrooms 3 x 12 ft, all eight feet high, and a low room, above the bedrooms, capable of containing beds, lighted by a sky-light at the back, p. 50. Half an acre alongside a cottage, 'in few cases exceeded, will in most cases be sufficient for the labour of one man', pp. 200-201.

[65] The process contrasted with the contemporary handling of the Llanddeiniolen squatters who built forty cottages near Caernarfon between 1789-1808. The law, the church and eight constables took three of the rioters to gaol when they tried to stop the cottages being demolished (Colin Ward, *Cotters and Squatters: Housing's Hidden History* (Nottingham, Five Leaves 2002), pp. 55-56.

[66] Ward, *Cotters and Squatters*, pp. 12-51, 107, 117.

[67] Tate, *Village Community*, p. 79.

[68] Ward, *Cotters and Squatters*, p. 105.

[69] See Gorsly Common in the Over Severn District (Tate, *Village Community*), p. 164; J L and Barbara Hammond, *The Village Labourer, 1760-1832: A Study of the Government of England before the Reform Bill* (1911, reprint London, Longmans Green 1995), pp. 31, 102-103.

[70] Houses incorporating weaving shops began to appear in both the rural and urban landscapes of Wiltshire and Gloucestershire from the 1790s. 'They are generally recognisable by the provision of larger or more multiple windows than was normal in artisan housing of this

best example in the hatting industry in South Gloucestershire was in Watley's End where many hatters' cottages were constructed and still stand as basic 'two-up, two-down' homes with a sloping-roofed back section.[71]

After 1710, the eleven South Gloucestershire villages surrounding the six hatting concentrations showed on average a steady increase in population over two seventy-year periods, eventually doubling in size (see next figure).[72] Against the average, in the first seventy-year period, Bitton increased by four times and Rangeworthy showed a slight decline. In the second period, Winterbourne and Frampton Cotterell increased by five times, and Iron Acton and Rangeworthy by three times.[73] By 1841, all the hatting villages, except Bitton and Westerleigh, comfortably bettered the average. There are good

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period. However, there is no standard pattern of weavers' houses. Most were financed and built as forms of investment by individuals outside the textile industry and generally conformed in style to local tradition: the weaving shops could be placed on the ground, first or second floors or be contained in single storey buildings adjacent to the main house' (Mary Palmer and Peter Neaverson, 'Home as Workplace in Nineteenth-Century Wiltshire and Gloucestershire', *Textile History*, No. 1, Vol. 35, May 2004), p. 29.

[71] Compare the connection with the cloth trade as purpose-built weavers' housing was a 'phenomenon of the last period of prosperity in the West Country cloth trade, which began in the last two decades of the eighteenth century' (Palmer and Neaverson, 'Home'), p. 29.

[72] Rudge gives a population count village by village throughout the county for 1710, taken from Atkyns; for 1770, from Rudder; and for 1801, from the first national census (Rudge, *History*, 'Preface', p. ix; Rudge, *General View*), pp. 351-361. The figures are consistently reported in the various documents; while this, in itself, does not promise accuracy, the general completeness of Rudge's works is impressive and suggests the probability of reasonable estimation. John Rickman, the first census taker, in 1801 sought to obtain from every Anglican parish minister totals of the number of baptisms and burials recorded in his registers for one year in ten for each decade throughout the first eighty years of the eighteenth century and for every year in the last two decades (marriages for every year from 1754 to 1800) (Wrigley and Schofield, *Population*), fn. 2, p. 2. These are recorded in Hundreds, not villages (*Abstract of the Answers and Returns, Parish Registers*, 14 George III, www.histpop.org, accessed 2009 onwards), pp. 107-110. Further work in 1836 looked back to before 1600, p. 3. The returns no longer exist. 'Most of the estimates of the population of England and Wales in the eighteenth century have derived in one way or another from Rickman's compilation of parish register data', fn. 4, p. 3. For Wrigley and Schofield's views of the 'serious inadequacies' in the completeness of Rickman's original returns which yet 'achieved a high standard of accuracy', *Population*, Appendix X, pp. 597-630.

[73] Appendix 52: *Village populations, 1700-1881*. Appendix 53: *Hatters in the Bitton census, 1831*. Appendix 54: *Hatter baptisms, Bristol Dioceses, 1813-1837*.

'hatting' explanations for this. At twice the long average, Frampton Cotterell (196 hatters in 1841), Winterbourne (177) were the primary bases for London-owned manufactories from around 1800.[74] At one and a half times, Iron Acton (21) and Rangeworthy (26) were the primary satellite manufactory parishes. At near the average, Bitton (196), including Oldland Common and Hanham, lost its major London connections in the 1820s, and Westerleigh's men (25) left to be nearer the manufactories.

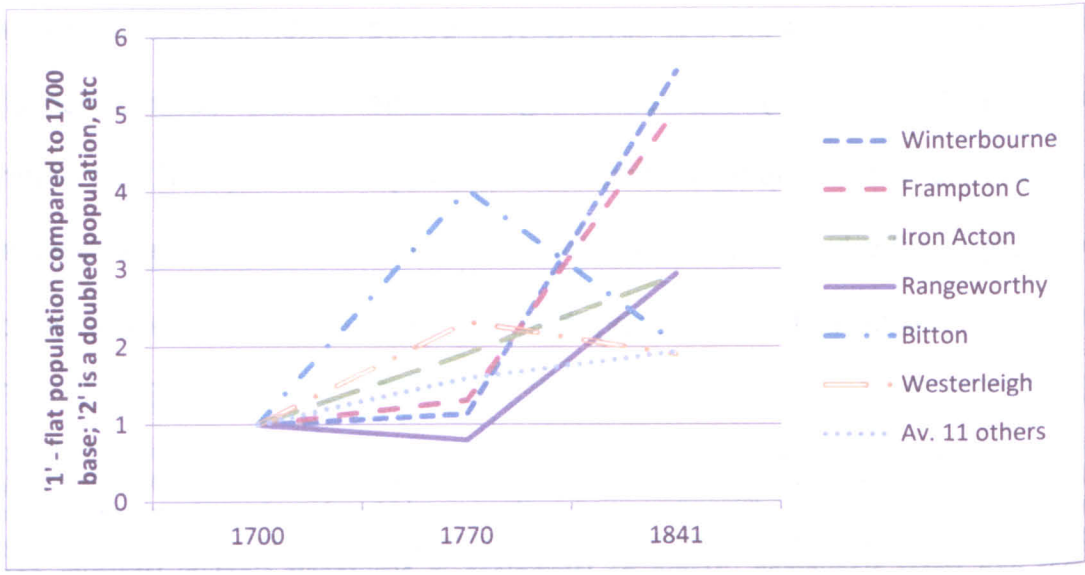

Figure 78: Population multiples in six hatter villages.[75]

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[74] 1841 census.

[75] Rudge's population figures for 1700 and 1770 for the six parishes known to hold most hatters in the nineteenth century were abstracted from their four Hundreds of Barton Regis, Langley and Swineshead, Pucklechurch, and Thornbury. These abstractions were compared with an average figure for the remaining eleven parishes within those Hundreds (Alvestone, Cold Ashton, Doynton, Littleton-upon-Severn, Marshfield, Olveston, Rockhampton, Siston, Thornbury, Titherington, and Wick and Absom). Population figures were then taken on the same basis from the 1841 Government census which provided a second seventy year gap between 1770-1841. To emphasise graphically the rates of population growth, the figures for 1700 were set to '1' which represented 100% of the base in each parish or group of parishes. In 1770, the 'value' is a multiple of the 1700 population; similarly, the 1841 'value' is a multiple of 1770 population. The 1700 population figures were Bitton 4,634, Frampton Cotterell 393, Iron Acton 460, Rangeworthy 150, Westerleigh 400, and Winterbourne 500. The Bitton figure supports the relative size of Bitton found in the Smyth muster of 1608. During the period 1801-1831, Bitton parish grew from a population of 4,992 to 8,703 (74%), and within that Oldland, 3,103 to 5,233 (69%); Frampton Cotterell, 1,208 to 1,816 (50%); Iron Acton, 868 to 1,372 (158%); Rangeworthy, 80%, a decline; Westerleigh, 1,582 to 1,709 (8%); and Winterbourne, 1,592 to 2,889 (81%).

Atkyns also gave the number of occupied premises for each village in 1710; the average occupancy in the main hatting villages was 3.9 people. If the same average is applied to the populations of 1770, 1,015 new dwellings were required, a doubling of the housing stock.[76] Squatting was probably a necessity in the villages, but not in Rangeworthy where there was a flat population.

	Pop. 1710 (Atkyns)	Houses 1710 (Atkyns)	Pop. 1770 (Rudder)	Houses 1770 (estimate)	House growth (estimate)
Bitton	1,150	320	4,634	1,188	3.71
Westerleigh	400	120	930	238	1.99
Winterbourne	500	120	567	145	1.21
Frampton C	300	56	393	101	1.80
Iron Acton	240	60	460	118	1.97
Rangeworthy	150	30	120	31	1.03

Table 7: Population and housing 1710, population and estimated housing, 1770.

About 1810, in Winterbourne and Oldland Common, 'society was in a low state of civilization, and their habits and amusements were in keeping with that condition; very few of the men could either read or write'.[77] The effects of encroachment on the village commons were plain to see as the 'houses of the people were mostly huts, and these were scattered up and down as if they had been sown broadcast'. Quaker Ann Fry, while conducting her work among the poor in the Bitton area, wrote in her journal for November 1812:

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[76] There will be variables to the average occupancy of 3.9 between 1710 and 1770, like the number of live-alone widows, and homes where one son or more worked, but their inclusion would be speculative.

[77] Specially contributed, 'The state of the felt hat trade in the early part of the century' (*HG*, 1/11/1886). Around 1800, cock-fighting was a favourite amusement watched by numbers of men, and 'some of them were not slow to play at that game themselves' (*HG*, 'Reminiscences', 1889); also Robert W Malcolmson, *Popular Recreations in English Society 1700-1850* (CUP 1973), pp. 49-50, 56, 118-122. The Primitive Methodists built their small Hebron Chapel at Frampton Cotterell on a cock fighting site. Hearle, 'Frome Valley', p. 16.

> Sixth-day, we again proceeded to *Cabra-heath* and *Wollard's common*; for the present we have left the Gang and are now amongst hatters, many of whom appear, we have been disposed to hope, under a religious concern for their souls' welfare; yet from the anxiety they labour under to provide for their numerous offspring, it is feared their good desires are too frequently overpowered thereby. From the high price of bread they have been compelled to begin upon their potatoes before their usual time, which, it seemed probably, would not carry them through the winter as heretofore.[78]

While these places had their 'special character', they were all 'congeries of straggling huts, with making shops, bow garrets, and drying stoves'.[79] The men wore 'trowsers, flannel shirts, and slippers, or wooden clogs, their arms being bared above the elbows'.[80] Although the hatters gave the districts a 'special character'; their proximity to the coal miners meant that 'little trace could be found in the district of the labours of the schoolmaster; the people were in a rude state, their dialect was peculiar to the district, in which the letters of the alphabet were frequently made to do duty where they had no right to be'.[81]

There was little general wealth. Many landlords were absent and the farms struggled. The workforce comprised pockets of labourers, whether in hatting

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[78] Marian Fry Pease, *Notes on the Fry family of Sutton Benger and Bristol, 1627-1921* (BRO, 27041018, 1945). This record contains a long section on Ann Fry (wife of chocolate maker J S Fry) during which Pease quotes from Ann's diary or journal. *Cabra-heath* is Cadbury Heath, near Warmley; *Wollards Common* is an old name for Oldland Common (Pegler, email, 2006). 'The potato was rapidly establishing itself as a staple diet for the poor labourer, though as yet it was not grown in many parishes to provide food for the whole winter' (Minchinton, 'Agriculture in Gloucestershire'), p. 169.
[79] *HG*, 'Reminiscences', 1889.
[80] Henry Mayhew, 'The Morning Chronicle Survey of Labour and the Poor: The Metropolitan Districts', Vol. 6, Letter LXXVII, 1850, p. 152.
[81] *HG*, 'Reminiscences', 1889.

or on or under the land. In these hard times, with the 'insecurity' of labour, of 'not knowing at the beginning of the week how much they would bring home at the end', there was a possibility of an upsurge in debt and economic crime.[82] Many records of the village poor rates and account books survive. Charges could be onerous, especially in a place like Bitton, in a spiral of decline, with a diminished monied class.[83] In 1818, among the Oldland Common hatting families, 'Rachel Harding wants bedding, Samuel Lacy wants employment, Jonathan Crowe wants employment, John White wants a shirt'. In 1822, a 'House of Industry' was built in Tower Field with £150 from lord of the manor Samuel Whittuck to 'defray all charges of removing paupers'.

If the immediate priority was food then there were few convictions over three decades among the hatters in their six main villages: forty-two fowls, eleven tame rabbits and two ducks in six cases in the higher courts; and ten perch and some turnips in two cases at the petty sessions.[84] There is no evidence of a surge in food or animal theft among the hatters in the first half of the nineteenth century.

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[82] Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital 1848-1875* (1975, reprint London, Abacus 2004), p. 258.

[83] These records are, incidentally, an excellent source for the identification of nineteenth century hatters' workshops, their occupants, location, relative size and length of tenure. For instance, among between fifteen to twenty such records each year, 1830, Isaac Cary, owner and occupier, house, workshops and garden, plot number 667 (BRO, P.B/OP/1(d), identifying map not found); 1831-1832, Joseph Leacock, occupier, for Mr Dowell [hat manufacturer of Bristol], owner, house, factory and garden, plot 295 (BRO, P.B/OP/2(f)).

[84] Gloucestershire Quarter Sessions and Assize Court between 1818-1848 (GA, Q/Gc/5/1-7, 6/1); 1822-1837 at petty sessions (GA, Q/PC; and Irene Wyatt, edited, *Calendar of Summary Convictions at Petty Sessions 1781-1837*, Gloucestershire Record Series, Vol. 22, *BGAS*, 2008). Bitton, Frampton Cotterell, Iron Acton, Rangeworthy, Westerleigh and Winterbourne.

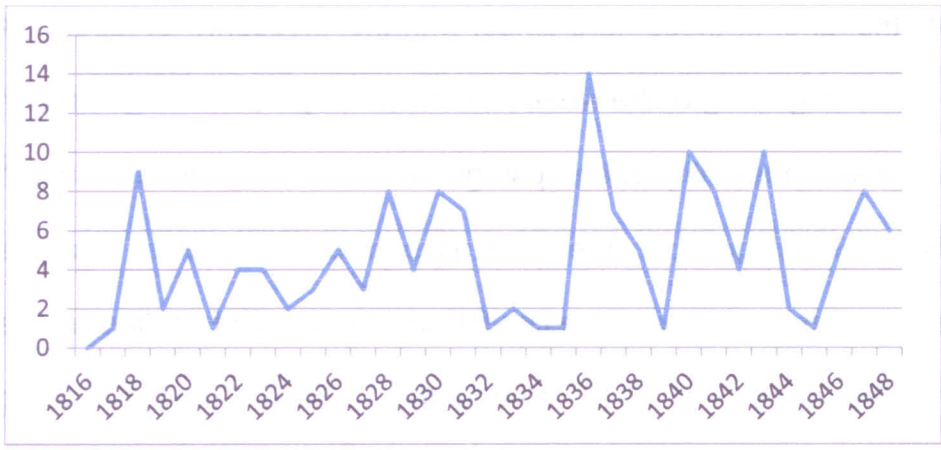

Figure 79: Total 'food' indictments in the six hatting villages, 1816-1848.

However, a ready supply of food was to hand with rabbit and game birds. The thoughts of local landowners turned to protection and the severity of game laws increased to match the threat.[85] Convicted poaching in Frampton Common, Oldland Common and Winterbourne was concentrated between 1829-1836 and was disproportionately weighted towards the hatters.[86] Overall, it was a steady but surprisingly slight pastime, even in cases that were brought before a 'bench or brace of sporting justices' at petty sessions like lords of the manor John Wadham at Winterbourne (who owned the major local warren) and John Hayward at Frampton Cotterell.[87] Perhaps many

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[85] In 1816 any armed person found in a forest, chase or park and convicted at Quarter Sessions was transported for seven years. Early return meant transportation for life. 'This savage act' was met by a reluctance to convict, and in 1825 the trial was moved to magistrates' courts with transportation reserved for the third office (Reports on the Parliamentary Select Committees on Labourers' Wages (1824), on the Game Laws (1823 and 1828), on Emigration (1826-1827), on Criminal Commitments and Convictions (1828), and Secondary Punishments (1831), cited in Hammonds, *Village Labourer*), p. 186. In the three years 1827-1830, one in seven of all the 8,502 criminal convictions in England were under the Game Code. First offence, three months' imprisonment; second offence, six months' (Hammonds, *Village Labourer*), pp. 189-190.

[86] Only three hatter poachers appeared at Gloucestershire quarter sessions and assize courts between 1818-1848 for a single incident in Frampton Cotterell; all were acquitted (GA, Q/Gc/5/1-7, 6/1).

[87] Thompson, *Customs*, p. 18, citing M K Ashby, *Joseph Ashby of Tysoe* (London 1974). 'In the hands of the country gentlemen of the eighteenth and still more of the beginning of the

expeditions were undiscovered or the matter sorted out locally. The three villages contributed 2.2% of all poaching cases in Gloucestershire, slightly less than their 2.6% proportion of the population.[88] There were nineteen poaching convictions, thirteen of them of hatters, constituting 26% of all crime in the villages at this level of justice. All manner of poaching techniques were employed: snare and tunnel nets, wire, gins, guns and dogs. Perpetrators were before the bench within a day or two or being caught. Informants usually received half the average fine of just under £6 5s; in some cases all of the income was assigned to the local overseers of the poor.[89] Some of these cases were very village affairs. In 1823, William Francombe, son of the foreman of George Vaughan's Watley's End hat manufactory, with another hatter William Woodruffe, was convicted for using two dogs to poach coneys from Wadham's warren at Cloisters. The informant was the warrener Jason Howes. The warren was a short walk from Vaughan's factory and its almost certain supplier of rabbit skins. This offence by William, a married hatter with three young children, would have caused some local tension.[90] Perhaps it was no wonder that Francombe and Woodruffe were both described in the court record as 'late of Winterbourne'.

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nineteenth century Game Laws became an instrument of terrible severity leading not infrequently to cruel oppression of individuals of the lower orders suspected of poaching' (Sidney and Beatrice Webb, *The Parish and the County*, Vol. 1 (1906, reprint London, Cass 1963), pp. 597-599. Also J L and Barbara Hammond, *The Town Labourer, 1760-1832: The New Civilisation* (1917, reprint London, Longmans Green 1995), p. 65; David Bentley, *English Criminal Justice in the Nineteenth Century*, London, Hambledon 1998), p. 26. Also, P B Munsche, *Gentlemen and Poachers: The English Game Laws 1671-1831* (CUP 1981); Douglas Hay, Peter Linebaugh, John Rule, E P Thompson and Cal Winslow, *Albion's Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth-Century England* (London, Peregrine 1975).

[88] Based on the 1831 census.

[89] GA, Q/PC; and Wyatt, *Petty Sessions*.

[90] 27/2/1823 (GA, Q/PC/2/42/B/9).

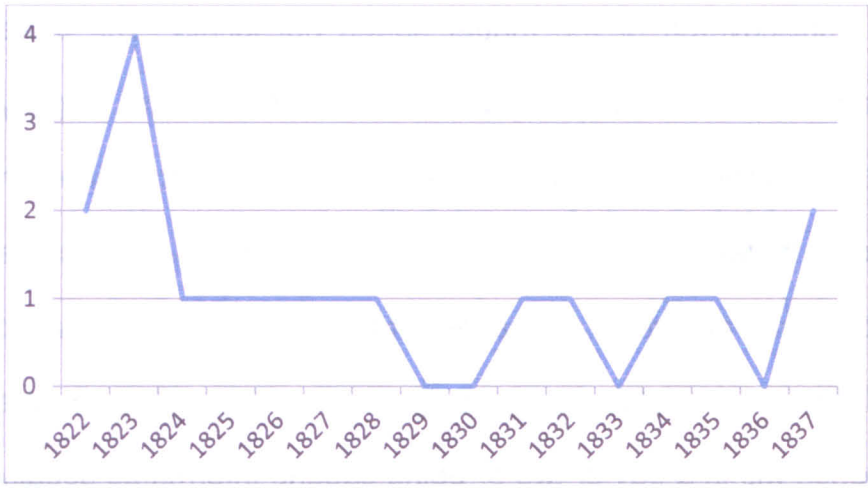

Figure 80: Convictions for poaching, three hatting villages, 1822-1837.

Among the broader feltmaker community there was little prosecuted trade crime, two employees each in Tetbury and Winterbourne, and one in Bitton, stole hats and fur from their masters in 1819 and 1820.[91] William Champion worked in his father's hat manufactory in Parsonage Street, Dursley. In 1823 he stole hat blocks worth £10 from one of the same Tetbury masters and was transported to Tasmania for ten years.[92]

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[91] In Tetbury, James Scales received three months' hard labour for stealing five hats from William Glover; William Lawrence, one month's imprisonment for stealing one hat and some fur from John Cave (Wyatt, *Petty Sessions*), pp. 47, 130, 138. Sentences had become more lenient: in 1784 John Webb, a journeyman-maker in Monmouth, stole twenty ounces of backs of coney wool and two and a quarter ounces of beaver from his master, Walter Woore, and was fined £20. Master hatter Thomas Miller, bought the wool and was fined £40. Neither paid the fine and, after a few days in goal, both were publicly whipped (*FFBJ*, 2/10/1784).

[92] William Glover, Tetbury, 26/10/1822 (GA, Q/Gc 5/2, *Register of Prisoners*). In Hobart Champion was assigned to a local hatter, started his own manufactory on conditional pardon in 1833, and later that year, ceased hatting and opened the *Jolly Hatter* inn. William donated the first set of English-style church bells to Hobart. His inn became a centre for organised trade unionism (*Hobart Town Gazette*, 2/10/1834; *The Gazette*, Gloucestershire, 30/12/1994). Also, Michael Quinlan, Margaret Gardner, Peter Akers, 'Reconsidering the Collective Impulse: Formal Organization and Informal Associations Among Workers in the Australian Colonies, 1795-1850', *Labour / Le Travail*, No. 52, 2003 (available www.historycooperative.org, accessed 5/2007; 'Dursley Bellringer Convicted' (accessed http://cotswoldedge.org.uk, available 5/2007); *Register of the National Estate* (Archive of Tasmania, 6/01/004/0300); *Tasmanian Ancestry*, Lou Daniels, 'Champion The Master Bellringer', 2007.

Inclosures in South Gloucestershire occurred late in the national cycle; lateness often meant more passivity than in the eighteenth century with the taking in of wastes rather than 'commonable fields'.[93] Early inclosures affecting the hatters directly (Iron Acton, 1780; Mangotsfield, shortly after 1790; and Rangeworthy, 1813) are either unavailable or short on occupations, making it difficult to determine the hatters' involvement.[94] The private acts and subsequent awards at the three main hatting centres of Bitton, including Oldland Common, 1819 and 1827; and Frampton Cotterell and Winterbourne, both 1825 and 1831, are available.[95] Bitton is not discussed here because of its lack of financial information.[96]

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[93] Arthur H Johnson, *The Disappearance of the Small Landowner* (Oxford 1909, reprint London, Merlin Press 1979), p. 86; John Chapman, 'The Extent and Nature of Parliamentary Enclosure', *The Agricultural History Review*, Vol. 35, No. 1, 1987, pp. 25-32; Roger J P Kain, John Chapman and Richard R Oliver, *The Enclosure Maps of England and Wales 1595-1918, A Cartographic Analysis and Electronic Catalogue* (CUP 2004), pp. 70-71. Mingay, *Parliamentary Enclosure*, p. 18. Tate, *Village Community*, p. 74. Brian Manning, *The English People and the English Revolution* (Penguin 1976), p. 141. Also Ward, *Cotters and Squatters*, pp. 86-81; Ralph Anstis, *Warren James and the Dean Forest Riots* (Coalway, Private 1986).

[94] Iron Acton: Act 18 George III; award (GA, Q/RI/1). Walter Long, lord of the manor, with his rights to soil and minerals, and the parish rector, the Reverend Joseph Jane, with his entitlement to glebe lands, sought successfully to enclose 270 acres in three areas called Acton Common, Marlepit Common and Cockshute. Mangotsfield: Charles Bragge, lord of the manor allotted thirty-seven acres of Downend Common under the Inclosure Act, 28 George III (28 George III). Rangeworthy: 1811, award and map (P264 SD 1/1, *GA*, poor condition, awaiting repair), copies (GA, D 5886 3/1 and 3/4, map PC 474). Robert Drew and Samuel Coventry, probably hatters, are named as chapel wardens and overseers responsible for 'seven several cottages' in the Rangeworthy inclosure minute book, one cottage housing hatter Charles Ovens (GA, D 3831/Box 10/1).

[95] Bitton, 59 George III, c. 1 (HCL, HL/PO/PB/1/1819/59G3n22; GA, Q/RI/24, award); this award, the first Bitton allotment, does not include financial information. The second Bitton inclosure act was in 1865 (GA, QRI/23). Frampton Cotterell, 20/5/1825, 6 George IV, c. 9 (HCL, HL/PO/PB/1/1825/6G4n141; GA, Q/RI/23, award) which dealt mainly with some fifty acres of common meadow left from one of the earliest actions in 1547. Winterbourne, 10/6/1825, 6 George IV, c. 24 (HCL, HL/PO/PB/1/1825/6G4n235; GA, Q/RI/161, award). Tate, 'Enclosure Acts', p. 22.

[96] There were four lords in Bitton because of the number of manors involved: Samuel Whittuck, Lord Henry Howard, Henry Creswick and Robert *Jefferiy*. The land to be enclosed was 190 acres on Oldland, North and Hanham Commons, Cadbury Heath and Longwell Green, and two arable fields, together about seventy acres where cattle and sheep were pastured every other year. The church was represented by the prebendary and vicar, the Reverend William Macdonald. A handful of other rights holders was later named with 'sundry other persons'. In Bitton there were 252 encroachments (34% of them on Oldland Common)

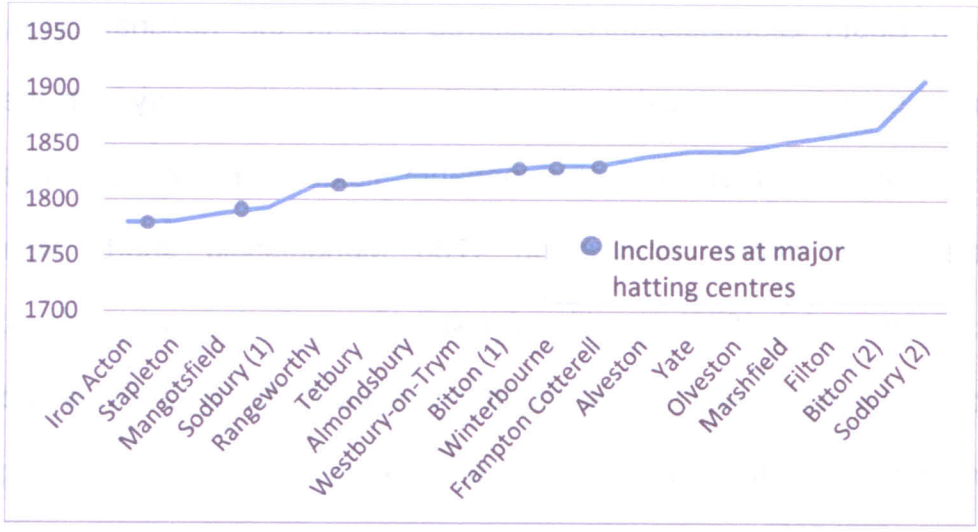

Figure 81: Years of inclosure awards in South Gloucestershire hatting villages. Activity was concentrated between 1780-1831.[97]

Most of the great and often emotional debate surrounding inclosure, the need for closed fields to feed the population and the enforced loss of common rights for the poorest, are of no direct concern to the hatters' story.[98] Some aspects of process and the use of power are germane. Each of the private bills was

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by a mixture of the working poor for homes and by the major commons rights holders and neighbouring farmers to increase their pastures. Among the awards were a minimum of forty-two hatters.

[97] All of these inclosures in the principal hatting villages occurred between the first general inclosure act of 1801 and that of 1836. The 1801 act (41 George III, c. 109) brought in against the combined opposition of the church, officials and lawyers, ended as a 'dismal half-measure', but did set out standard clauses for enclosure bills. Individual bills continued apace but they were simplified and supposedly made cheaper. The 1836 act (6&7 William IV, c. 115) empowered two-thirds of the proprietors in number and value of the common fields to appoint commissioners and to carry out inclosures without the confirmation of a private act; at seven-eighths by number and value they could agree among themselves whatever the remaining one-eighth might wish.

[98] The Hammonds drove their fighting standard into the soil of inclosure (Hammonds, *Village Labourer*). Tate saw the Hammonds' denunciation as 'one of the most brilliant works of historical fiction in the English tongue' (*Village Community*), p. 180. The Hammonds were not alone in their contempt; some views in part summarised in Kain, Chapman, Oliver (*Enclosure Maps*), pp. 1-2. Neeson thought the pre-enclosure lobby wished to change the social structure of rural England (*Commoners*), pp. 44-45. Thompson saw it all as 'a plain enough case of class robbery (*Working Class*), p. 218. Cobbett thought the 'poor were sacrificed and needlessly sacrificed' (*Rural Rides in the Counties*, 1831, CUP 2009), Vol. ii, p. 42. Allen, through economic spectacles, gave a small censure as the 'emergence of long-term mortgages provided the capital for acquisition and enclosure' (*Enclosure and the Yeoman*, OUP 1992), pp. 78-79, 310-311. Also, well worthwhile, Arthur H Johnson, *The Disappearance of the Small Landowner* (Oxford 1909, reprint London, Merlin Press 1979) and Curtler, *Enclosure and Redistribution*.

arranged by the lord of the manor and other principal common rights holders, and specified the land to be dispensed: in Frampton Cotterell, seventy-three acres; in Winterbourne, 185 acres.[99] Commissioners were 'given by statute an all-but-absolute authority' to enclose and redistribute common and open fields.[100] Successful opposition to the gentry and the magistrate, the powers that appointed the commissioner, lay in an individual's 'ability to move a dim and distant Parliament of great landlords to come to his rescue'.[101] A parliamentary enquiry acknowledged that all was generally settled between the 'solicitor and two or three principal proprietors without ever letting the rest of them into the secret till they are called upon to sign the petition'. The first the hatters knew was when the inclosure act was fixed to the church door.[102]

The 'hatter' inclosure acts contained a common clause which allowed legal title to encroachers who had acted over twenty years before. W H R Curtler felt that 'considering that they were originally trespassers, and the necessary legal title to land was then sixty years, this treatment must be pronounced

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[99] Wadham bought his manor following a newspaper advertisement in 1810 (Elliott, *Winterbourne*), p. 12. 'To be sold: The manorial rights & property of the soil, part of Frenchay Common, extending over about 17 acres, nine acres of which is let on lease for quarrying for 21 years, at the net yearly rent of £100, together with several chief or quit rents, amounting to £5 7s 6d, paid annually in respect of several buildings & inclosures erected on & taken out of said common. That part of the common which is not on lease contains very rich & valuable stone, which may be worked at a trifling expense (*The Bristol Gazette*, 26/4/1810). Wadham made his money in the flint glass business in Bristol, including the Phoenix Glass Company, and through these interests was partner to a number of the city's prominent hatters (*FFBJ*, 22/8/1789. Assignment of Wadham's share in Wadham, Fry, Ricketts & Co, 29/1/1795, to Richard Ricketts, Jacob Ricketts, and David Evans (BRO, 11982/22). Cyril Weeden, 'The Ricketts Family and The Phoenix Glasshouse, Bristol', *The Glass Circle Journal*, No 4, 1982.

[100] M W Beresford, 'Commissioners of Enclosure', *The Economic History Review*, Vol. 16, No. 2, 1946, p. 130.

[101] Hammonds, *Village Labourer*, p. 45. Also Thompson, *Customs*, pp. 18, 21.

[102] Stephen Addington, *Inquiry in the Reasons for and against Inclosing Open-Fields* (1772). Hammonds, *Village Labourer*, p. 44. Hill, *Social History*, p. 17.

generous'. Encroachments made under twenty years were forfeited to the legal owner of the soil; 'the encroachers being allowed to remove their houses, or rather hovels, which they had erected, or in some cases to stay on the land as tenants'.[103] This latter was not the case with the hatters. There is no evidence of hatters or other squatters turned off the land, but then the award documents are models of reporting with no emotion or side stories.[104] If anything they suggest agreement and this is supported by an interesting document, commissioner Edward Sampson's diary and account of the preparation of the award in Winterbourne.[105] Sampson describes, as an example, walks in August and September 1825 at the beginning of his work. Among the hatters, he noted Charles Amos claiming a right over a messuage, barton, garden and orchard at Watley's End, called *Doodings*; William Curtis, a messuage of one acre called *Rodmans*; Samuel Parker, of Winterbourne Lane, a messuage, barton, garden, orchard and land called *Parkers*; none of them suggesting brief occupation.[106] Sampson staked part of a field belonging to George Vaughan at Watley's End, and strips taken in front of the house of Stephen Francombe, Vaughan's foreman, and also at the Salem meeting house.[107]

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[103] Curtler, *Enclosure and Redistribution*, p. 246. Hammonds, *Village Labourer*, pp. 102-103.
[104] Gregory Clark, and Anthony Clark, 'Common Rights to Land in England, 1475-1839', *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 61, No. 4, December 2001, p. 1010.
[105] 1825-1833 (BRO, 4625).
[106] They each won their case.
[107] Sampson also reported a lengthy dispute with an, at times, petulant Wadham over a rabbit warren he claimed at Cloisters Common by Watley's End. The debate took place openly at meetings and in letters, for example, *BM*, 5/2/1827. Wadham received about six acres, partly bounded by the River Frome, in Sampson's judgement 'equivalent in value to the said rabbit warren'.

The land engrossment by the lords of the manor and other common rights holders who initiated the private acts for inclosure, shows that their anticipation of personal improvement was correct. In Frampton Cotterell, Haythorne ended with one half of all of the newly-inclosed land, 36.3 acres, within which he paid £497 15s for land additional to that allotted as compensation. Other Frampton Cotterell rights holders together held just 3%. Haythorne's land was bought at £25 4s 5d an acre, a similar price to that of incomers who bought large plots and those squatters who sought to add substantially to the land around their homes. This might reflect either the intent of the legislation to establish large, enclosed workable fields, or prior arrangement. Rights holders in Winterbourne were allotted seventy-three pieces of land by agreement without cost in lieu of losses.[108]

In Winterbourne, Wadham was not a dominant landowner like Haythorne.[109] He and his fellow rights holders ended with 73% of the available land for an outlay of 48% of the total expenditure of £1,638 18s.[110] Holders purchased thirty lots directly, seemingly without competition, for the third highest average price paid per acre of £51 16s 7d. The highest price of £75 16s 5d an acre for

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[108] There was supposedly a legal 'allotment to the lord of the manor of one-sixteenth or so of the common, and his proportion of the tithe owner's at one–seventh or thereabout', but this can nowhere be substantiated in the South Gloucestershire awards (Tate, *Village Community*), p. 114.

[109] Alongside Wadham, as lord of the manor, the other rights holders were the trustees of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital; Sir John Smyth; and sixteen individuals with just one, or a few, pieces of common land. Among these were four hatters (Charles Amos, William Curtis, Jeffery Matthews and James Smith); the rest were a disparate collection including the landlord of the local *George and Dragon Inn*; a quarryman, a miller and a schoolmaster; local farmers like Samuel Fowler and Edward Parker, senior and younger; and absentee landlords and widows, often with additional property allotted or sold in the Frampton Cotterell inclosure.

[110] 81.64 acres: Wadham, 17%, including all ten of the village's Pennant stone quarries; QEH, 10%; and the other seventeen combined, 43%.

just four awards was paid by those encroachers who had already inclosed fields and wished to add to their land. The second highest average price of £58 16s 2d was paid by eighteen incomers who wished to buy closed fields for agriculture.

At Frampton Cotterell there were seventy-nine encroachments where homes were built and, of these, awards were made to forty hatters and three tradesmen. The other awards (46%) were to commons rights holders who had, presumably, leased to local agricultural workers and to feltmakers, about a third of the workforce. The highest price, £46 13s 5d an acre, was paid by those who had only recently squatted, had no rights and, possibly because they had everything to lose, were forced to pay most. These were not hatters. The hatters were involved with fifty-five transactions (27%) to acquire 13% of the available acreage at an average of £9 16s 2d an acre. The individual purchases were small, averaging under thirty perches at £5 5s 2d. The hatters' purchases always reflected small enlargements of an existing property rather than an intention to start serious farming. This confirms that hatting, not farming, was their focus.

In Winterbourne with seventy-six encroachments, there were no recent inclosures comparable with those of Frampton Cotterell. There were thirteen hatters out of the forty-three instances of property building among the crafts and trades in periods of long-term habitation. There were also sixty-four mentions in the inclosure award of 'old inclosures', whose occupiers were only

named when their property abutted new allotments and these included three hatters.[111] There were many more unnamed which probably included other hatters given the longevity of the local trade. The forty-nine squatters who were looking to add small amounts of land around their homes, which they had occupied for over twenty years, paid £39 0s 2d. Together, nineteen hatters bought just over five acres at the lowest average price of £38 8s 5d; they were all squatters looking to add in a small way to the properties.

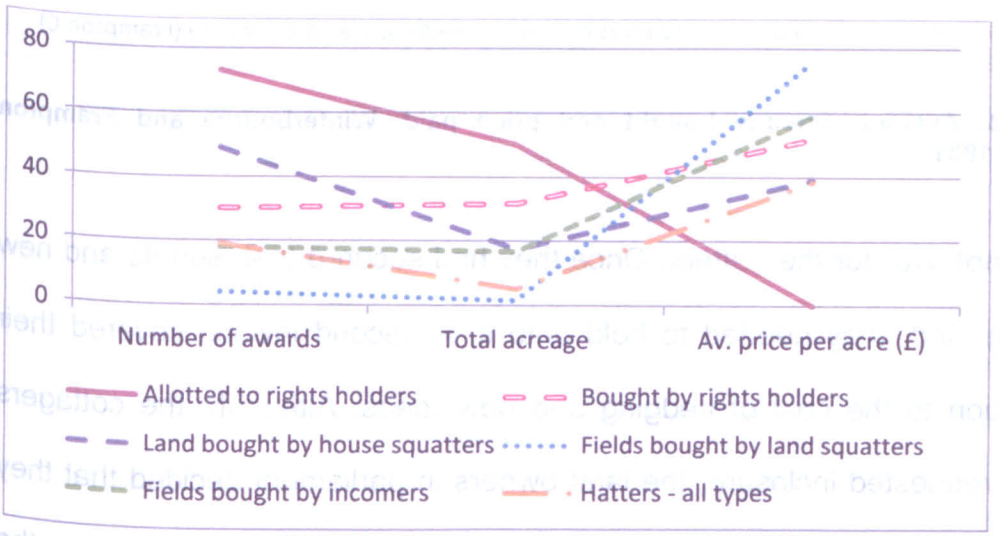

Figure 82: Analysis of inclosure awards at Winterbourne by type of recipient, 1831.

Whatever the acquisitions of the gentry and land proprietors and the price they paid, the hatters did rather well, securing their properties comfortably below the average price per acre, £38 8s 5d in Winterbourne and £9 16s 2d in Frampton Cotterell. This was an inter-village premium of almost four times reflecting the quality of the land. Winterbourne's hatters' average purchase size was 0.26% of an acre, Frampton Cotterell 0.18%.[112]

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[111] Mark and Solomon Maggs, and Joseph Sargent.

[112] Winterbourne's inclosures raised payments for land of £3,409 15s of which 88% paid for the salary and expenses of commissioner Edward Sampson and his staff. This considerable income suggests that the avowed attempts of the 1801 act to reduce the cost of inclosures

Figure 83: Average acreage bought and price paid, Winterbourne and Frampton Cotterell, 1831.

All was not over for the hatters. Once they had secured their squats and new adjoining land, they needed to hold onto it. A second invoice covered their contribution to the cost of hedging and new roads. Although, the cottagers had not requested inclosure, the land owners in parliament decided that they would be made to contribute to its wider cost. 'To meet the expenses ... the small man was ever tempted, and sometimes forced by financial distress, to sell his holding to a richer neighbour, or to some capitalist who was seeking for land. Thus, the indirect result of enclosure was consolidation. The poorer sold and the rich bought.'[113]

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was not a success, at least in the hatter villages in 1831. What did happen was a shift in cost from common rights beneficiaries to incomers and to the smaller local purchasers. In Winterbourne, Wadham contributed just £222, the trustees of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, £154, and Sir John Smyth, nothing.

[113] Johnson, *Disappearance*, p. 101. Hill, *Social History*, p. 19.

One observer differentiated between the 'rough-and-ready' body makers of the country districts, 'sadly wanting in feelings of self-respect, and regardless of public opinion [whose] traits ... were not improved by their love of drink', and the hat finishers of the town, who were a 'very respectable set of men ... possessed of more manly feelings of personal independence and self-respect'. The reason suggested for the difference was that:

> The hat making business was a very disagreeable one; the men were most of their time employed over large kettles of boiling water with their persons enveloped in steam. The making shops were, as a pretty general rule, miserable sheds, with large openings to allow the steam to escape, and as the men were obliged to work with their shirt-sleeves tucked up above their elbows they were continually liable to catch colds. In the summer seasons they suffered from both the heat of their kettles and that of the atmosphere, and in the winter they suffered from the cold vapours hanging like dark clouds about them, or they were exposed to the through air draughts by which the shops were ventilated. It was therefore not strange that men living under such uncomfortable conditions should seek comfort in fire water, and their civilization should have been of a low standard.[114]

Alcohol formed the basis of much of the men's relaxation and extended from there into the workplace and into their rituals. Long before the hatters became mad, they were drunk; the phrase 'Drunk as a hatter' was a common expression from the eighteenth century.[115] A tankard of ale featured prominently on the hatter's *blank* which gained entry and nourishment at the

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[114] *HG*, specially contributed, 'The state of the felt hat trade in the early part of the century', 1/11/1886.

[115] James Dawson Burn, *A Glimpse at The Social Conditions of The Working Classes during the early part of the Present Century, Trade Strikes and their Consequences to the People who may be immediately Connected with them with Reflections upon Trades' Unions and their Management* (London Heywood 1868).

trade's turnhouses after a day's tramp. Hatters' box clubs were naturally situated in public houses.[116] In prosperous times, Oldland Common hatters worked just three days and spent the remainder of the week 'seated on the green with barrels of beer'.[117] In a probable reaction to drunkenness, at least four of the hatters of the Hicks family in Oldland Bottom were given the first name *Sober*.[118] Death through drink was common. Thomas Cole, a hatter of Bitton, returned home 'intoxicated' on a Saturday evening in 1811, fell over a railing in a quarry, and was killed on the spot'.[119] In 1871, when Robert Maggs was found dead by the path from Watley's End to the Frampton Cotterell hatters' club, he was first thought by other hatters passing by to be drunk.[120]

The most insidious use of alcohol was directly at the work place. The hatters drank 'great quantities of beer when at work, two pots, or even ten pints, a day being a frequent consumption by a man not accounted a *fuddler*'.[121] Individual weekly spend on drink in the 1820s regularly reached 18s out of a £3-4 pay packet. 'Seeing that young men in the onset of life were subjected to such degrading influences, it is not to be wondered at that many of them should have suffered moral shipwreck.'[122] A letter from Frampton Cotterell to Christy management urged an end to the 'horrible practice' and for 'restraint of

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[116] For examples of these activities see Chapter 8: *Combination, 1700-1835.*
[117] BRO, 21744, Box 1/2, *Oldland Common.*
[118] Email, Shirley Fry, 21/11/2009.
[119] *BM*, 4/11/1811.
[120] An inquest found he died from long-term heart trouble (GA, CO1/1/17/B/18).
[121] Mayhew, 'Labour and the Poor', p. 152.
[122] *HG*, 1/11/1886.

bringing such quantities to the shop' for the 'poor families' sake'.[123] Henry Mayhew found that a man was 'almost forced to drink a lot of beer ... or he would be counted a sneak'.[124] *Garnishes* were demanded at any event in a hatter's life, for instance apprenticeship, a new job, marriage or fatherhood. 'Dissipated scamps' would raise the *insist* for real and imagined slights to be paid in money intended for immediate drinking.[125]

There was a practical side to the drink as fibre dust needed slaking and the men worked with fires at many stages of manufacture. Dust in textile production was a grudging concern after 1800.[126] The feltmaker's garret was 'particularly close' because 'care was taken to prevent currents of air disturbing the material'. The feltmaker inhaled 'much fine dust'. As a result, 'the men are rather pale, complain often of tightness in the chest, particularly in damp weather, and are subject to asthma'. For reasons of cost the author has been unable to conduct a study of causes of death amongst the hatters in a South Gloucestershire village, but there are ready examples of hatters' deaths by asthma in Winterbourne with, for instance in 1844, James Smith,

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[123] Undated, unsigned to Samuel Christy (CA, B/JJ/S/15).
[124] Mayhew, 'Labour and the Poor', p. 150.
[125] *HG*, 1/11/1886.
[126] In 1816, Robert Peel's Committee using Robert Owen's experiences in New Lanark, led to the *Cotton Mills and Factories Act*, 1819 (59 George III c. 66). This was reinforced by the Sadler Committee on child labour in 1832. One witness could not recall ever applying the 'stethoscope to any person who had been twenty years in a dusty mill, in whom I did not find decided marks of disease in the lungs or air tube' (HCL, The Sadler Report: Committee on the *Bill to Regulate the Labour of Children in the Mills and Factories of the United Kingdom*, 1832, Vol. XV, 1831-1832), p. 178.

aged 56, and George Lowe, aged 62.[127] A study of causes of death amongst hatting operatives over fifteen years in Stockport between 1895-1899 showed 52% mortality from phthisis, pneumonia and bronchitis compared to all hatter deaths.[128]

Figure 84: A feltmaker, window tightly closed, working amidst wool dust, 1834.[129]

Industrial diseases were an accepted part of working life, 'as inevitable and as unpleasant as the long hours or uncertainty of employment'.[130] Once afflicted, victims tended to 'suffer in silence and anonymity'; hidden from public view, like the hatters in their villages, 'their ranks were swelled not by sudden catastrophes but by a process of relentless accumulation'. Historical neglect

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[127] *Death certificates*, General Register Office (GRO). A full study of, say, 1,000 causes of death among men in Winterbourne after 1841 would cost £8,500 and the GRO will not discuss alternative approaches.

[128] Charles Porter, 'Remarks on Felt Hat Making: Its Processes and Hygiene', *The British Medical Journal*, Vol. 1, No. 2146, 15 February 1902, p. 380. Phthisis: disease of the respiratory system, especially asthma or tuberculosis (OED). In the 1870s, a Dr Proust found that the proportion of hatmakers' deaths suffering from phthisis in France was 23.6%, compared to other callings at 11.4% (*HG*, 1/10/1878, 'Is the Manufacture of Hats an Unhealthy Trade?'), p. 799.

[129] Dodd, *Hat-Factory*, p. 145.

[130] Anthony S Wohl, *Endangered Lives, Public Health in Victorian Britain* (London, Dent 1983), p. 264. P W J Bartrip, *The Home Office and the Dangerous Trades, Regulating Occupational Disease in Victorian and Edwardian Britain*, The Wellcome Series in the History of Medicine, No. 68 (Amsterdam, Rodopi 2002), pp. 1-3, 9.

of the 'dangerous trades' reflected not the rarity of workplace disease but the 'priorities of a society in which neither medical practitioners nor labour leaders nor politicians placed much emphasis on it'.[131] Almost exclusively it was the 'poor, the unenfranchised, the politically impotent and the inarticulate' who suffered trade-related illnesses. The hatters were by no means extreme examples of these attributes.[132] If poor, they were generally not destitute; they had their nascent trade union and with it information from the tramping system; and a determined voice when it came to entry to the trade and to pay. It is not surprising that the other workplace afflictions of the hatters' dangerous trade were not properly understood until towards the end of the nineteenth century.[133]

It was natural for Government to concentrate first on the cotton and wool industries, especially in crowded, dust-thick factories filled with water- and

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[131] For general background, Roy Porter, *Disease, Medicine and Society in England 1550-1860*, Studies for The Economic History Society (London, Macmillan 1987). Smith, *Wealth*, Vol. 1, p. 73. Charles Booth, *London: A Portrait of the Poor at the Turn of the Century*, Vol. 2, 1890, edited Albert Fried and Richard Elman (Harmondsworth, Pelican 1971), 'all but ignored occupational health and safety' in his major investigation of the London poor.

[132] John Rule, *The Experience of Labour in Eighteenth-Century Industry* (London, Croom Helm, 1981), p. 88.

[133] The *Factory Act*, 1833, recognised that the state had a role to play in protecting workers and appointed four inspectors with 'revolutionary' powers to act as 'industrial policemen, prosecutors, juries and judges' (Wohl, Endangered Lives), pp. 258-259. The first significant attempt to improve safety and prevent accidents dated from the *Factory Act*, 1844, which dealt with textile factories, as well as reducing the hours of work for children. From 1845, factory inspectors recorded statistics of accidents, but had no obligation to collect occupational disease data for another fifty years. 'As a result, there were few official indications (and less hard data) of the connections between work and ill health. When calculations were made, usually in respect of a particular trade in the course of an isolated investigation, the results were generally fragmentary, inconclusive and unsatisfactory' (Bartrip, *Dangerous Trades*), pp. 1, 5-9.

steam-powered machines.[134] The first four diseases to be officially recognised as constituting occupational hazards in manufacturing industry were lead, phosphorus and arsenic poisonings, and anthrax.[135] In an environment of almost no literature, few figures and, therefore, poor diagnosis, the possibility of anthrax being also a hatters' disease should be mooted.[136] Wool sorting was a dirty job, done by hand. It generated clouds of dust and involved contact with contaminated bloody materials from animals brought from where the disease was endemic.[137] In the wool trade these animals were identified as Turkish goats, the camel, and the South American vicuna.[138] These species were also used by the hatters in the Bristol region as the main alternatives to the beaver, goat since at least 1700.[139] Anthrax mortality was never high and by the time the disease was recognised and brought under

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[134] These conditions passed quickly into literature. For instance, Elizabeth Gaskell, *North and South* (1855, reprint Penguin 1995), which, in chapter 13, deals with the effects of cotton fluff in the factories.

[135] Bartrip, *Dangerous Trades*, p. 1.

[136] F Marc LaForce, 'Woolsorters' Disease in England', *Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine*, Vol. 54, No. 10, 11/1978, p. 956. The second form of anthrax, cutaneous, produces severe ulceration, the 'malignant pustule' of Twigg's Black Death (Graham Twigg, *The Black Death, A Biological Reappraisal*, London, Batsford 1984).

[137] C Turner Thackrah, *The Effects of Arts, Trades and Professions and of Civic States and Habits of Living, on Health and Longevity: with Suggestions for the Removal of Many of the Agents which Produce Disease and Shorten the Duration of Life*, 2nd edition (London, Longman, Rees, 1832), p. 69. Bartrip, *Dangerous Trades*, pp. 233, 239. In 1895 the Italian, Achille Sclavo developed an effective antiserum and today anthrax can be effectively treated with penicillin or tetracycline (Tim Carter, 'The Dissemination of Anthrax from Imported Wool: Kidderminster 1900-1914', *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, Vol. 61, No. 2, 2/2004), p. 103; (Bartrip, *Dangerous Trades*), p. 233.

[138] LaForce, 'Woolsorters' Disease', p. 956; Bartrip, *Dangerous Trades*, p. 235; Carter, 'Kidderminster', p. 103.

[139] Petition from the hatters of Bristol, 1/2/1764 (HCJ, Vol. 29), p. 775; (HCJ, 1700-1702, Vol. 10), pp. 634, 638. London County Council report, 1894 (Bartrip, *Dangerous Trades*), p. 245. Select Committee Report, 11/2/1752 (HCJ, Vol. II). Also, 5/3/1746 (HCJ, Vol. 29), p. 838. *The Jenkinson Papers 1760-1766*, edited Ninetta S Jucker, London, Macmillan, 1949), pp. 274-5 (original in BL, MS/38202, folio 180-1). *Annual Reports*, Chief Inspector of Factories (TNA). Bartrip, *Dangerous Trades*, pp. 237, 245.

control at the beginning of the twentieth century, hatmaking had left the Gloucestershire villages.

The cause of the most notorious of all the hatters' occupational diseases, *hatters' shakes*, or mercury poisoning, was equally unrecognised even though the effects of the poisoning were known for centuries.[140] Sadly, and particularly for the hatters, alcoholism 'favours its development'.[141] In hatting, these effects were first identified in 1860 in the USA.[142] Later studies added erethism to the stomatisis and tremor.[143] An erethistic man is 'easily upset and embarrassed, loses all joy in life, and lives in constant fear of being dismissed

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[140] Alice Hamilton, *Industrial Poisons In The United States* (New York, Macmillan 1925). Rule, *Experience of Labour*, p. 79. Ramazzini, *Diseases of Workers*. Symptoms were the 'swelling and ulceration of the gums, loosening of the teeth, fetor of the breath, abnormal flow of saliva, tremors of the upper extremities, or a shaking palsy, and frequently some febrile action'. The tremor usually began in the fingers, but the eyelids, lips and tongue were affected early. As it progressed to the arms and legs, it became difficult for a man to move about the workshop. Tremors may end if all work around wool stopped. Also Richard P Wedeen, 'Were the Hatters of New Jersey 'Mad'?', *American Journal of Industrial Medicine*, Vol. 16, Issue 2, p. 226.

[141] Monamy Buckell, Donald Hunter, Reginald Milton, Kenneth M A Perry, 'Chronic Mercury Poisoning', *British Journal of Industrial Medicine*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 4/1946, p. 55. Also Donald Hunter, *The Diseases of Occupation* (London, Hodder and Stoughton 1955; fifth edition 1975), pp. 295-309; *Health in Industry* (Penguin 1959), pp. 121-129.

[142] Hamilton cites an attribution of the first mention of mercurialism in hatters' furriers to Reitz in St Petersburg in 1829 (*Industrial Poisons*), p. 255. J Addison Freeman, 'Mercurial Diseases among Hatters', *Transactions of the New Jersey State Medical Society*, 1860; reprinted *HG*, 'Hatting: The Health of Operatives, 1/8/1885, p. 443. It is this late date, 1860, which begins the doubt about whether Lewis Carroll's hatter was deliberately written as 'mad' for *Alice in Wonderland* was written just five years later. Carroll never used the phrase 'mad hatter' and it is doubtful whether he had read Freeman's article in an obscure foreign publication. Significantly, Freeman mentioned tremors in the *upper* extremities, while arguments for madness based on Carroll's book note tremors of the legs and nowhere else. Nevertheless, the debate is enjoyable and has a wide literature, particularly, H A Waldron, 'Did the Mad Hatter have mercury poisoning?', *British Medical Journal*, Vol. 287, 24-31/12/1983, p. 1961, followed by lively correspondence, T M L Price, Reginald Lightwood, Selwyn H Goodacre, Vol. 288, 28/1/1984, pp. 324-325; numerous articles in *HG*, which mischievously floats other explanations for madness (1/9/1874, 2/2/1880, 1/41880); Leonard J Goldwater, *Mercury: A History of Quicksilver* (Baltimore, USA, York Press 1972), pp. 272-275; and Martin Gardner, 'Introduction', *The Annotated Alice: 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland' and 'Through the Looking Glass'*, Lewis Carroll (New York, Clarkson Potter 1960).

[143] W Gilman Thompson, *The Occupational Diseases: Their Causation, Symptoms, Treatment and Prevention* (1914), cited in Goldwater, *Mercury*), pp. 268-269.

from his job'.[144] He becomes timid and may lose self control if he is watched at work, throwing down his tools in anger.

Feltmakers, and latterly and more insistently hat manufacturers, looked for a way to reduce felting times and the cost of production. If the filaments and scales on the fur and wool were separated, made limp, twisted and roughened, they would more quickly engage with each other.[145] The smaller and weaker the material filaments, as with Gloucestershire and South Wales wools, the slower the felting time and the more chemical washing needed.[146] *Carrotting*, washing with a mix based on mercury nitrate, greatly improved fur preparation.[147] It was the vapour trail left by carrotted fur that made it continually dangerous. The furrier was at danger with his mixing and brushing of the mercury liquor; as was the feltmaker surrounded by fine dust in his garret and at his kettle of heated acidic liquor; the workers in the dyeing and

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[144] Erethism: Abnormally high degree of irritability or sensitivity in any part of the body; a personality disorder resulting from mercury poisoning; an abnormal tendency to become aroused quickly, especially sexually, as the result of a verbal or psychic stimulus. Stomatitis: Inflammation of the mucous lining of the mouth, which may involve the cheeks, gums, tongue, lips, and roof or floor of the mouth (available http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com; accessed 7/2011).

[145] For many years an acid bath mix of one part nitric acid to four parts vinegar was used (Hamilton, *Industrial Poisons*), p. 254. Diderot, 'Chapelier', *Recueil de Planches*. T Mallalieu, *Mercury Poisoning in the Hat Trade* (Felt Hatters' and Trimmers' Unions of Great Britain, pamphlet, January 1912), p. 3.

[146] Watson Smith, *The Chemistry of Hat Manufacturing*, lectures delivered before the Hat Manufacturers' Association, 1906, edited Albert Shonk (London, Project Gutenberg, Scott, Greenwood & Son 2006).

[147] Appendix 55: *The use of mercury nitrate in English hat making*. French formulae were said to contain white arsenic and mercuric chloride (Hamilton, *Industrial Poisons*), p. 255. The fur while on the skin is moistened by hand-held brush with the acid nitrate of mercury solution, and then the skins are spread out flat to dry. Fur allowed to dry in the air becomes white, but when it is dried by steam or artificial heat is 'assumes a yellow, carroty hue' (Mallalieu, 'Mercury Poisoning'), pp. 1-2; (Hamilton, *Industrial Poisons*), pp. 254-255.

drying rooms; and the finisher smoothing the hats with hot irons.[148] Only one mention of carrotted fur, two and a half pounds of 'blown coney', has been found in South Gloucestershire, but it is in an important place, an inventory of the Christy factory in 1855.[149]

Morbidity statistics in the nineteenth century rely mostly on work done in America where studies decided that hatters affected by mercury were not victims of their own ignorance and drunkenness, but blighted by an industry that 'profited from their peril'.[150] It seems few in the industry, men or masters, knew or cared what they were looking at.[151] The general secretary of the *Felt Hatters' Union of Great Britain*, Thomas Mallalieu, considered new evidence on mercury poisoning in 1912 and was shocked enough to write that members 'may have wondered why they have heard so little of it before'.[152]

One extra affliction noticed by investigator Charles Thackrah did notice was the effect on hatters' hands on regular submersion in the near-boiling sulphuric acid solution in their kettles.[153] 'Their nails and cuticles of their fingers are often corroded and sore.' Charles Porter collected references to

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[148] Hamilton conducted analyses of the mercury content of felt hats in different states of manufacture. She found there was a 'decided loss of mercury' through the process: Carrotted, dried in oven, cut when wet, 2.41%; carrotted, dried in oven, seasoned three months, 1.88%; sized hat, 1.69%; blown fur, 1.3%; finished hat, 0.85% (*Industrial Poisons*), p. 266. Also Porter 'Felt Hat Making', pp. 377-379.

[149] 13/7/1855. Appendix 56: *Inventory of goods belonging to Messrs Christy's at their manufactory, Frampton Cotterell* (CA).

[150] Weeden, 'New Jersey', p. 228, citing Freeman, 'Mercurial Diseases' and L W Bates 'Mercury Poisoning in the Industries of New York and Vicinity', *American Association for Labour Legislation*, p. 13.

[151] Wedeen, 'New Jersey', p. 232.

[152] Mallalieu, *Mercury Poisoning*, p. 1.

[153] A Meiklejohn, A, *The Life, Work and Times of Charles Turner Thackrah, Surgeon and Apothecary of Leeds, 1795-1833* (reprint E and S Livingstone 1957), pp. 121-122.

'fissures and abrasures' of the hand' from constant contact with acid water by rolling the felts up and down the planks, with 'foreshortened and loosened nails the colour of ivory, and callosities on the fleshy raised parts'. 'The wear and tear on the planker's hand is undoubtedly very great'; cases were found in which 'almost complete loss of power has resulted'.[154] This was surely experienced in the villages.

By 1850, the Order of Oddfellows reported that hatters lived just one year less compared with the wider membership in England and Wales, with half of them dead by their sixty-third year.[155] Hatters were slightly more prone to die young, but there was less general sickness; the longer they lived the better their life expectation against other occupations. Over fifty years of age they were 7.9% more likely to be sick suggesting the diseases of their occupation often led to a less than comfortable old age.[156] One report placed hatters and weavers alone in a category characterised by 'long lives, high sickness time'.[157]

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[154] Porter, 'Felt Making', p. 379.

[155] Henry Ratcliffe, 1850, *Observations on the rate of mortality existing among friendly societies*, Manchester: Independent Order of Oddfellows taken from twenty-six occupations among their members for which sufficient data was available, including directly hatters working mostly in Lancashire and Middlesex. Also Martin Gorsky, Aravinda Guntupalli, Bernard Harris, Andrew Hinde, *Ageing, Sickness And Health In England And Wales During The Mortality Transition*, Annual Meeting of the Social Science History Association, Miami, 2510/2008. Mayhew, 'Labour and the Poor', p. 152.

[156] Sickness to the Friendly Societies was not 'medical sickness', but an 'incapacity from labour', a more serious matter (Francis Neison, *House of Commons Committee on Friendly Societies*, 1849), p. 16. Also Neison's son, also Francis Neison, used the term 'inability to work' (*Royal Commission on Friendly Societies*, 1873), p. 222, both cited in Gorsky *et al*, *Ageing*, p. 3.

[157] Relative Hazards of Occupations, 1846-1848 (James C Riley, *Sick, Not Dead: The Health of British Workingmen During the Mortality Decline*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), Table 7.4, p. 205. Riley usefully discusses the trend to greater sickness while living longer, pp. 202-211; determinants of sickness time and mortality are reviewed on pp. 233-268. Gloucestershire generally had markedly higher sickness rates in the Foresters' Friendly Society, 1872-1910, in the top category of 10-14.9%, p. 220.

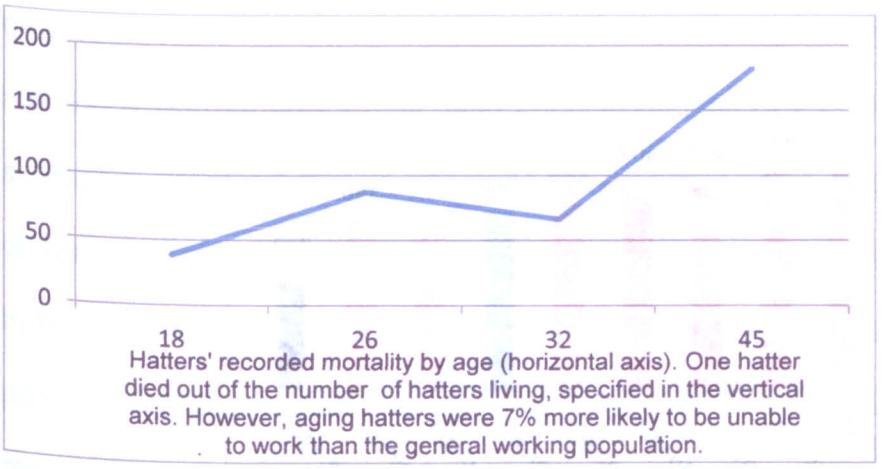

Figure 85: Friendly Society hatter morbidity, Manchester, 1850.[158]

Depressed and psychotic hatters might be expected to commit suicide more frequently, or at least noticeably, in the villages. There is no evidence that this was the case, but many of the inquest files are lost. There are three possible exceptions, insufficient to build any case connected with occupational illness; a few other cases have non-occupational causes.[159] 'The quantity of strong liquids consumed during work sent many of the workmen reeling home drunk, using in many cases strong language and being not an unmeasurable distance from temporary madness.'[160] Nationally, later in the nineteenth century, hatters presented a high suicide rate.

[158] Early comparative occupational studies within friendly societies were unsuccessful through lack of information (Gorsky *et al*, *Ageing*), pp. 9-10.
[159] Appendix 57: *Hatter insanity and suicide, 1816-1891.*
[160] *HG*, 1/7/1889, p. 334.

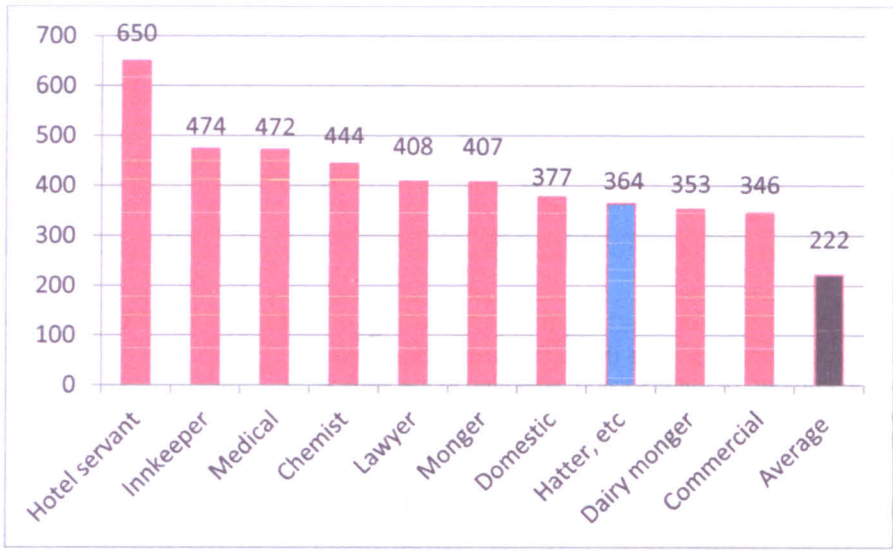

Figure 86: Top male suicides by occupation, 1878-1883.[161]

If the hatters were not mad, had their work illnesses and poverty made them unusually bad? They exhibited a more casual approach to violence compared to their village communities where they constituted about a third of the working males. In the seventy-three crimes tried at petty sessions between 1829-1836 in Oldland, Frampton Cotterell and Winterbourne, thirty-one concerned assault and twenty of these (65%) were committed by hatters.[162] Watley's End was the centre of a wider area of violence that took in neighbouring Winterbourne and Frampton Cotterell, but largely excluded Oldland. Most cases, twenty, involved men fighting men, but a further eleven concerned men attacking women and at least two of these were wives of

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[161] Suicides per million living, 25-65 years, 1 million universe. The first-ranked occupation for suicide, the soldier, with a rate per million living of 1,149 has been omitted from the chart because of its extreme variation. The full categories for each listed occupation are: inn, hotel servant; innkeeper, publican, spirit, wine and beer dealer; medical practitioner; chemist, druggist; barrister, solicitor; butcher, fishmonger, poulterer, greengrocer, fruiterer; domestic servant; hairdresser, hatter, glover, umbrella, stick maker; cheesemonger, butterman, milkman; commercial traveller, broker, agent (William Ogle, 'Suicides in England and Wales', *Journal of the Statistical Society of London*, Vol. 49, 1886), p. 108.

[162] GA, Q/PC; and Wyatt, *Petty Sessions*.

other journeymen in Frampton Cotterell.[163] The average fine for an attack by a man on a woman was £2 5s, with court expenses of £1 10s. This is clearly seen as a worse act that an attack on another man which had an average fine of 18s 8d and expenses of 10s 10d. What does put both into perspective is that the average fine applied by Wadham and others for the nineteen poaching offences was £6 5s placing an almost three times higher value on the lord of the manor's rabbit than on a woman's beating. The third large category of offence with eighteen cases was connected with alcohol licences, principally late hours or gaming in public houses.

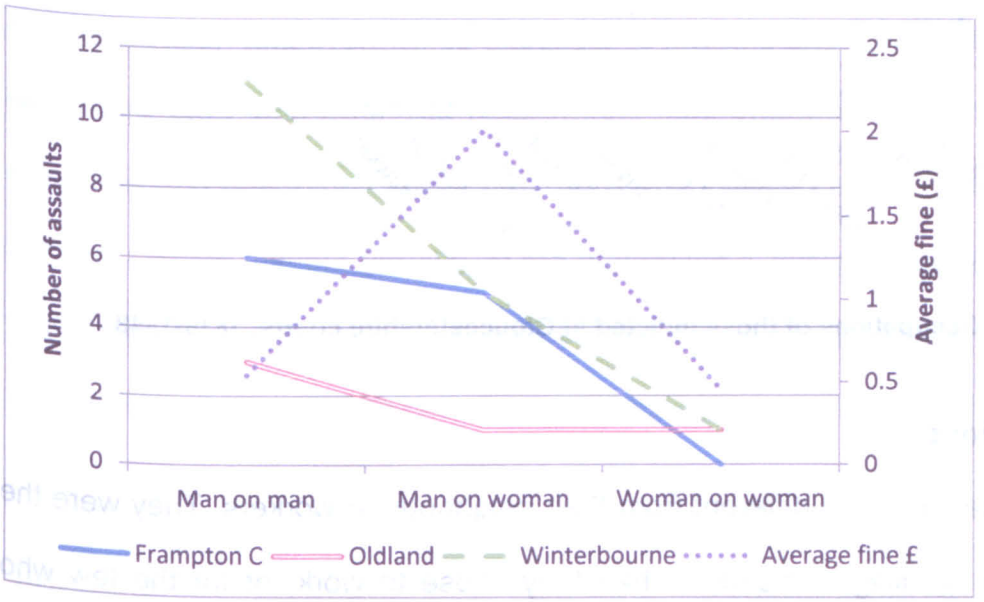

Figure 87: Assaults in three hatter villages, 1829-1836.

There were few serious indictments of violence and theft by hatters heard at Gloucester between 1816-1848; only two were for murder, receiving twenty-

[163] 5/11/1929, John Screen, aged fifty-eight, on Ann Roach, thirty-three, wife of Robert (GA, 49/A/3); 13/3/1834, William Hibbs, aged eighteen, on Leah Skidmore, thirty-eight, wife of William (GA, 53/C/2).

four and eighteen months' imprisonment.[164] In 1817, Robert Maggs was condemned for burglary, but reprieved and transported.[165] For all crime heard at the senior courts, twenty-nine hatters were indicted in six hatter villages, a paltry 0.16% considering their levels of employment. Unsurprisingly, by far the greatest 'criminal class' was the common labourer. Reflecting a dying trade, the average age of hatters in trouble was 30.9 years against a county average for all offenders of 27.1.

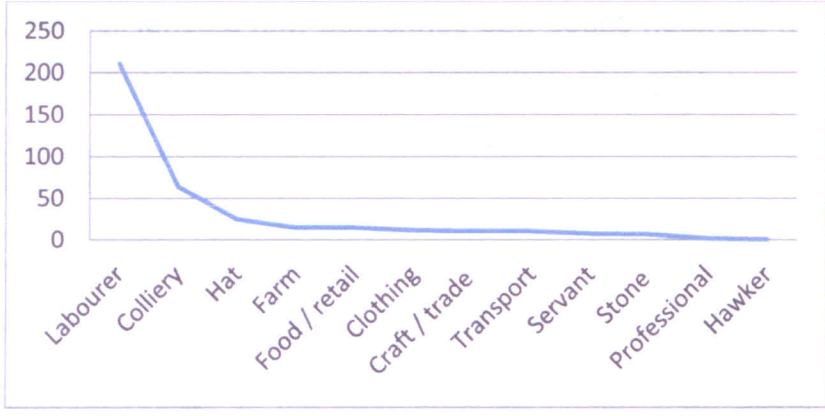

Figure 88: Occupations of those indicted at Gloucestershire courts, 1816-1848.

Conclusions

The feltmakers were different from their neighbouring workers. They were the best paid of village artisans. When they chose to work, or for the few who managed to become a small master, they could acquire sufficient capital to prepare a partible inheritance of country cottages, supplemented by

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[164] In 1828, Arthur Roberts, aged sixty, murdered his wife Elizabeth, many years his junior. The charge was reduced to manslaughter (GA, Q/Gc/5/3). The next year Robert House murdered Thomas Low. 'Long-term imprisonment however was virtually unknown, sentences of imprisonment rarely exceeding twelve months' (Bailey, English Criminal Justice), p. 12.

[165] 'Although felony was capital, by the late eighteenth century only a small proportion of those capitally convicted actually suffered death. The Crown had the power, liberally exercised in practice, to commute hanging to some lesser penalty such as transportation, (Bailey, English Criminal Justice), p. 2. Maggs was later hanged for horse theft after fleeing his 'employment' in New South Wales (*Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 10/3/1821, 31/3/1821, 1/9/1821).

aggressive but orderly squatting. For the majority, their wealth was never great and, because of their focussed skills, they were more vulnerable than other country workers. The feltmakers lived day-to-day, working when the seasonal orders arrived and supplementing their income from limited country gardens. The feltmakers managed their own family-based systems for protecting and disseminating their elite skills. They concentrated their workshops in the eighteenth century, gradually withdrawing into ever denser areas which then grew faster than surrounding villages with the arrival of the London hat manufacturers. Working conditions were mostly bad, with poor accommodation and even worse exposure to passing and serious illness. The feltmakers lived long lives, but paid in their later years for their exposure to chemicals and dust. They were often drunkards involved in petty lawlessness, but they seldom 'caught the eye' of the authorities. Cousin marriages became the norm. Their 'difference' extended to their own management of order and decorum.

8 The villages: Combination, 1700-1835

By the spring of 1834 the hatters' union of South Gloucestershire assumed a prosperous future. Membership stood at over 700 men, the largest concentration of apprentice-trained journeymen outside of the capital.[1] These were powerful, 'advantaged' unionists with a long and integrated history, possessing probably the most sophisticated communications and support system in the country.[2] The loss over the last thirty years of the export trade to the slave coasts and to the plantations was compensated by the arrival of, perhaps, twenty London firms bringing contracts, mortgages, new factories and new markets. Order books were full and London firms, locally located, like Christy's, Hall's and Vaughan's were hiring.[3] Recent national wage disputes were concluded mostly to general advantage.[4] Amalgamation with the London journeyman, enemies just three years before, was surprisingly successful. Improvements to the national tramping system were agreed.[5] All around was the rhetoric of reformers John Doherty and Robert Owen and the excitement of 'national unionism'.[6]

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[1] *BM*, 19/2, 5/3/1842. *Bristol Times*, 26/2/1842.
[2] Chase, *Early Trade Unionism*, p. 146. David R Green, 'Lines of Conflict: Labour Disputes in London 1790-1870', *International Review of Social History*, 43, 1998, p. 227. Robert Sykes, 'Trade Unionism and Class Consciousness: the 'Revolutionary' Period of General Unionism, 1829-1834' in John Rule, edited, *British Trade Unionism 1750-1850: The Formative Years*, (London, Longman 1988), p. 183.
[3] CA. Elliott, *Winterbourne*, p. 63.
[4] 'Trades' Societies and Strikes', *Report of the Committee on Trades' Societies*, London, National Association for the Promotion of Social Science 1860), p. 354. Green, 'Conflict', pp. 212-213. *Select Committee on State of Law in United Kingdom respecting ... Combination of Workmen*, 1824 (HCL, TNA).
[5] Smith, *Hat Trades*, p. 242. Public Order, Discontent and Protest 1820-1850 (TNA, HO 52, Reel 27, Box 25, 1834), pp. 246-257.
[6] W H Oliver, 'The Consolidated Trades' Union of 1834', *The Economic History Review*, New Series, Vol. 17, No. 1, 1964, pp. 77-95. R G Kirby and A E Musson, *The Voice of the People*,

The hatters' union was centred in main cities, the core hatting districts of Atherstone, Denton, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stockport, and in the twin local pillars of Oldland Common and Winterbourne. Each district was allocated subsidiary areas of responsibility: Oldland Common managed Bridgwater, Exeter, Devizes, Frome, Marshfield, Shaftsbury, Sherborne, Taunton and Tiverton; Winterbourne looked north and west to Bristol, Gloucester, Hereford, Ross, Tewkesbury, South Wales and Stroud.[7] The background to the remarkable influence of these two South Gloucestershire villages is investigated with, later, particular attention paid to national integration, performance in industrial relations, and to the great strike of 1834-1835 when the hatters' union was stalked, duped and broken by the firm of Christy's.

The Privy Council petition of 1618, in which the Company sought powers of search and confiscation in the villages, is seventeenth-century evidence of a 'widening cultural gap' between an organisation of city traders and their sometime suppliers. The situation was not unusual.[8] It was, for example, reflected in textile manufacture where 'corporately-controlled handicraft was

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John Doherty, 1798-1854, Trade unionist, radical and factory reformer (MUP 1975), pp. 153-271.

[7] There were twenty-three districts across the United Kingdom; the cities were Belfast, Carlisle, Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow, London, Liverpool, Manchester and Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Oldham Public, 53 HA4, Library Articles of the *Hatters' Union of Great Britain and Ireland*, instituted 16/4/1833, revised 13/4/1839, Oldham 1839); also revised at London 28/2/1842 as the *Society of Journeymen Hatters*, London 1842 (Oldham Public Library, 53 HA5, copy from the firm Cheetham's).

[8] Chase, *Early Trade Unionism*, p. 38.

definitely undermined by ... cottage or village industry'.[9] Even before the seventeenth century, Malcolm Chase found 'real social tensions between commercial and manufacturing capital and between large and small masters'.[10]

Some degree of counter combination seems likely amongst the villages to combat the expansionist plans of the Bristol haberdashers. The very separation of Bristol capital from village labour over several decades 'provided the historical context for the emergence of the perception of a distinct labour interest which is the pre-condition for trade unionism'.[11] At the extreme, such conflicts led to 'an irreconcilable antagonism of interest' between employer and worker under industrial capitalism.[12]

In 1870, Brentano famously declared that 'Trade-Unions are the successors of the old Gilds'.[13] With great respect and support for Brentano's work, the Webbs were at pains to point out that 'succession' following the collapse of an old system did not necessarily imply 'descent'. They asserted 'with some degree of confidence, that in no case did any Trade Union in the United Kingdom arise either directly or indirectly by descent from a Craft Gild' and

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[9] H A Turner, *Trade Union Growth, Structure and Policy, A Comparative study of the Cotton Unions* (London, Allen and Unwin 1962), p. 20.
[10] Chase, *Early Trade Unionism,* p. 15.
[11] John Rule, 'Overview', in Rule, *Formative Years*, Ch. 1, p. 1. Webbs, *Trade Unionism*, pp. 6-11. Chase, *Early Trade Unionism,* p. 15.
[12] Arnold Toynbee, *Lectures on the Industrial Revolution of the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1919), p. 206; F Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, translated W O Henderson and W H Chaloner (Manchester, 1958), Chapter 9; C R Dobson, *Masters and Journeymen, A Prehistory of Industrial Relations 1717-1800* (London, Croom Helm 1980), p. 16.
[13] Brentano, *essay*, Smith, *Gilds*, p. clxv.

with this the South Gloucestershire feltmakers would agree.[14] There is no evidence in the Company minute book of a separate journeyman's guild within a guild, nor of any organisational connection with the village feltmakers. Brentano's argument became misunderstood, perhaps because it relied too much on the 'picturesque likenesses' between craft guilds and trade union forerunners exemplified by the London hatters in the seventeenth and eighteen centuries.[15] G D H Cole made the regional feltmakers' point neatly by claiming that 'independent attempts at combination, rather than the Gilds themselves, are to be regarded as the forerunners of Trade Unionism'.[16]

Some historians see all groups of village craftsmen living outside city walls as self-exiled journeymen seeking freedom from Company restraints on their freedom to trade and to improve their lot.[17] The evidence from South Gloucestershire, at least, comfortably rejects this position. Village craftsmen developed an individualism that was 'pre-industrial and pre-capitalist'.[18] Thompson thought Brentano was 'perhaps right' when the latter declared that 'trade unions originated with the non-observance of 5 Elizabeth c.4'.[19] The country feltmakers certainly developed their own management of the apprentice system, indeed became its trade champion, but there is also

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[14] Webbs, *Trade Unionism*, pp. 12-14.
[15] 'The phrase 'picturesque likenesses' is from Fuller, *Friendly Societies*, p. 3.
[16] Cole, *Short History*, p. 25.
[17] Walker, Guild *control*, p.6; Ramsay, 'Laisser-Faire', p. 109; Fuller, *Friendly Societies* (Lingfield, University of Reading 1964), p. 3.
[18] Alan Fox, *History and Heritage, The Social Origins of the British Industrial Relations System* (London, Allen and Unwin 1985), p. xiii.
[19] The Statute of Artificers. E P Thompson, 'English trade unionism and other labour movements before 1790', *Bulletin: Society for the Study of Labour History*, Autumn 1968', Chapter XVII, p. 23.

evidence at the beginning of the seventeenth century of villagers sending their boys into the city for formal training.[20] Their path was set to become the 'ideal type of labour aristocrat ... [because their] work called for skill and judgement [and] because a trade provided a formal ... line of demarcation separating the privileged from the unprivileged'.[21]

The few seventeenth-century probate inventories of the village feltmakers, like those of the Ellery family, indicate comfort and success while that of Bristol haberdasher of hats Thomas Dawes in 1682, with its extensive wool supplies and numerous felt bow strings for journeymen, suggests that the distinction between city capital and the labour of the village craftsmen was by then already well marked.[22] A piecework solution to the acrimony of 1618 was in place.[23] As country masters had never been subject to sixteenth-century restrictions on sub-contract work imposed in London, the 'practice had taken deep root, especially in Gloucestershire and the north-west'.[24] Mayhew reported that 'hatters work by the piece, and have done so beyond the memory of the oldest members of the trade'.[25]

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[20] Discussed in Chapter 3: *The villages to 1700.*
[21] E J Hobsbawm, 'Artisan or Labour Aristocrat', *The Economic History Review*, New Series, Vol. 37, No. 3, August 1984, p. 358.
[22] Chapters 3: *The villages to 1700*; and 5: *Home trade, 1600-1855.*
[23] Chapter 4: *Monopolies, 1550-1855.*
[24] Smith, *Felt Trades*, p. 152.
[25] Mayhew, 'Labour and the Poor', p. 150.

In these country districts, most of the felt bodymaking and *ruffing* was done at the workers' own homes, or in small piecemasters' shops.[26] The men established communities of both village and trade. Loose organisations encompassed 'the industrial and social context within which work took place and in which "work" and "life" were much less sharply divided than in the [later] age of the factory. They developed according to the character of need as perceived at the time.'[27]

Combination was more difficult for outworkers, by 'virtue of their scattered and dispersed domestic work location and the variety ... of masters', but these were villages of tight-knit and inter-married families.[28] The example of the Ellerys shows seventeenth century feltmaking concentrated within kinship groups spread across the hatting villages. At least another thirty-five families were represented in the trade before 1700 and of these seventeen were established in Winterbourne alone before 1625. The inter-reliance of the village hatting families is emphasised by the degree of inter-breeding in Watley's End found later.[29] These increasingly related village workers surely discussed threats to their welfare caused by Bristol ambition and capital. If they did, the slow process to full unionisation had begun. William Ashley and C R Dobson claimed that if British trade unionism originated in the

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[26] J H Smith, *The Hatters* (Felt Hatters' & Trimmers' Unions of Great Britain, 1972), p. 3. Appendix 58, *Hatters' argot and technical terms, 1700-1850*, for the meaning of italicised industry terms.

[27] Adrian Randall, 'The Industrial Moral Economy of the Gloucestershire Weavers in the Eighteenth Century', in Rule, *Formative Years*, p. 31.

[28] Duncan Bythell, *The Handloom Weavers, A Study in the English Cotton Industry during the Industrial Revolution* (CUP 1969), p. 187.

[29] Twenty-two immediately neighbouring families in Watley's End in 1841 had blood relationships by marriage (Comparisons of 1841 census and parish records).

seventeenth and eighteen centuries, 'the habit of acting together in certain ways, which we find to characterise the journeymen of the eighteenth century, had been formed in a much earlier period'.[30]

Randall thought that 'clearly it was easier to maintain a formal and continuous presence in workshop trades where skills were at a premium and not easily acquired'. He showed that later emphasis on

> formal and overt organisation, upon regular meetings and orderly negotiations, resulted in a heavy bias towards the study of those Metropolitan artisans [with] historically accessible combinations ... and in the neglect of the equally typical fragmentary union tradition which was characteristic in a wide variety of trades across the country.[31]

Here, Randall leads to two significant groups which, if the feltmakers of South Gloucestershire were influenced by outsiders, were the probable sources of such influence: the combinations of the feltmakers of London and the well-documented activities of the Gloucestershire weavers.

Unwin found that from the very beginning of the records of the Feltmakers' Company of London in 1667, there were 'clear indications of the combined action of the journeymen'.[32] The Company favourably considered a petition of

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[30] Sir William Ashley, *Surveys: Historic and Economic* (London, 1900), cited in Webbs, *Trade Unionism*, fn. (unnumbered), p.13, and Dobson, *Masters and Journeymen*, p. 47.
[31] Randall, 'Moral Economy', pp. 29, 32.
[32] Smith, *Hatters*, p. 3. George Unwin was born in 1870 and spent his first nineteen years in Stockport, by then the hatters' English 'capital' and which 'supplied him with his first theme' and led in turn to studies of early industrial organisation and London guilds. Also, *Studies in*

journeymen feltmakers from London; a resulting by-law stated that 'the journeymen may not by combination or otherwise excessively at their pleasure raise their wages'; a piecework list was fixed annually.[33] In 1696, feltmakers sought to protect their wages. The price paid to them for each beaver hat had risen since 1667 from five pence to 3s 2d. In the face of competition from French and Dutch immigrants and cheap country labour, the masters attempted to reduce wages. Unwin found that the attempt was met 'with all the promptness and vigour of a well-organised society'. Set up in 'clubs', the hatters unlawfully 'raised several sums of money for the abetting and supporting such of them who should desert their masters' service'.[34] The hatters were 'repeatedly prosecuted for refusing to work at lower rates' and 'retaliated by stirring up the apprentices against one who submitted and tied him in a wheelbarrow, & in a tumultuous and riotous manner, [drove] him through all the considerable places of Southwark'.[35] The dispute lasted three years but, in June 1699, the journeymen 'obtained arbitration entirely in their favour'. Unwin decided that the London hatters possessed the conditions essential to continuous existence and successful activity and were 'at least a combination undergoing a process of evolution, and revealing some of the elements of Trade Unionism in the act of detaching themselves from a complex of earlier economic ideas'.[36]

Economic History, The Collected Papers of George Unwin, edited R H Tawney, Royal Economic Society (London, Macmillan 1927), pp. xi-xiii.

[33] LGL, *Feltmakers' Court Book*, 8/10/1667.

[34] LGL, *Feltmakers' Court Book*, 25/11/1697.

[35] LGL, *Feltmakers' Court Book*, 23/11/1698.

[36] Unwin, *Industrial Organisation*, pp. 216-223. Also Giles, 'Felt-Hatting', p. 121; and Chase, *Early Trade Unionism*, p. 18.

It does seem likely that word of the struggles of the London clubs reached Bristol and demonstrated the benefits of combination. In 1708 the same London journeymen were in contact with hatters in other major towns in England over regulations for tramping.[37] This contact also establishes the hatters as one of the earliest trades to have a national employment network.

The Gloucestershire weavers had extensive, early and notorious industrial relations which, through considerable circumstantial evidence, can be argued as influencers of the regional feltmakers. The closeness of the two trades has already been discussed.[38] Tucker described the many men working in the cloth shops (but this is equally applicable to the hatters), as having it 'in their Power to vitiate and corrupt each other, to cabal and associate against their Masters, and to break out into Mobs and Riots upon every little occasion'. The journeymen 'think it no Crime to get as much Wages, and to do as little for it as they possibly can, to lie and cheat'.[39] Randall concluded that the structure of the industry, consisting of 'Paymasters' and craft-conscious workers, created a 'pattern of aggressive and sometimes very bitter industrial relations'.[40] In balance, it must also be admitted that that many of the relationships between Bristol haberdashers of hats and village small masters were cordial with, for instance, the former acting as 'good friends' and

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[37] Leeson, *Travelling Brothers*, p. 94. Leeson's source is not given. Also Smith, *Hatters*, p. 3; Giles, 'Felt-Hatting', p. 120, and Turner, *First Shop*, p. 19.
[38] Chapter 3: *The beginnings: Villages to 1700.*
[39] Tucker, 'Instructions for travellers', pp. 244-45.
[40] Randall, *Luddites*, p. 18.

executors to the latters' estates.[41] The Webbs saw the pioneers of the trade union movement 'not in the trade clubs of the town artisans, but the extensive combinations of the West of England woollen-workers and the Midland framework knitters'. It was these associations that worked to 'save the wage-earners from the new policy of buying labour, like the raw material of manufacture, in the cheapest market'.[42] While the pioneers of trade unionism came from the wool business, it was not confined just to weavers and knitters; it was also long-lived in the felt hat trade.[43]

The South Gloucestershire feltmakers began the eighteenth century grouped in family and trade units in their traditional villages. The first focus was on Bristol from where the hat manufacturers and shop keepers supplied orders and raw material. Over the next one hundred years feltmaker numbers increased to near one thousand, but their centres of production slowly centralised towards Frampton Cotterell, Oldland Common, Rangeworthy and Winterbourne, this process increasing with the arrival of London interests after 1755.[44] The villages saw the growth of piece-work small masters, mostly employing up to ten men, many of them kin and almost all the result, by 1800, of up to ten generations of community-controlled apprenticeships. There were

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[41] For example, Edward Ransford, 'dealer in hats all and singular' of Bristol, and local felt maker John Millett were the trustees charged with managing James Palser's affairs for the benefit of his wife, Mary, also a Millett (GA, Will 4/1799, probate 7/10/1825, 1825/204).
[42] Webbs, *Trade Unionism*, pp. 46-47.
[43] W E Minchinton, 'Beginnings of Trade Unionism: Gloucestershire Woollen Industry', *TBGAS*, Vol. 70, pp. 126-141, 1951; Unwin, 'Trade Union'.
[44] Chapter 9: *London factories, 1755-1855.*

incomers and passing economic migrants, but the villages were at heart self-sustaining.

Thompson was at pains to include the feltmakers with the tailors and weavers and other artisan textile groups as the 'first trade union organisations which may be considered in terms of the origins of the later movement'.[45] John Rule concurred that the hatters were a 'well organised body of men [and] were among the first to form effective trade unions'.[46] Charles Booth dated the *Journeymen Hatters' Fair Trade Union* of London from 1759 and called it 'probably the oldest trade society in England'.[47]

To what degree did the local hatters in the eighteenth century support or act with their increasingly militant nationally-organised brothers? In 1764, an anonymous wholesale hat manufacturer wrote that the 'Journeymen Hat-makers are as it were of one Body throughout England. What is decreed in London, or elsewhere, is strictly observed to the most remote part of the Kingdom'.[48]

There are five principal strands in the hatters' eighteenth-century evolution: tramping; legislation; box clubs and friendly societies; direct action taken by

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[45] Thompson, 'English trade unionism', p. 22.
[46] Rule, *Experience of Labour*, p. 28.
[47] Charles Booth, *London: A Portrait of the Poor at the Turn of the Century*, Vol. 2, 1890, edited Albert Fried and Richard Elman (Harmondsworth, Pelican 1971), p. 89.
[48] Galericus, *St James Chronicle*, 13/3/1764.

the union in terms of organisation and complaint; and engagement with national issues. Each is examined alongside local evidence.

Chase claims that the masons first organised to help journeymen seek work away from home in the 1580s 'at the latest'.[49] There is general agreement that the tramping custom came to the fore in the textiles trades at the beginning of the eighteenth century, particularly in the West Country.[50] The hatters, as usual, were among the first to embrace the custom and to transform it into a system, probably in the late seventeenth century. Town-to-town correspondence promoting tramping followed work shortages in 1708; publican ex-hatters had houses of call in London in the early 1730s.[51]

In the early days, feltmakers would seldom have to leave home to seek work, but as the 'supply of hands became greater than the demand', men would be obliged to travel.[52] Two matters here concern South Gloucestershire. First, local workshops were already a substantial element of the national hatting workforce and would be part of the network. Rule saw an essential link in spreading information about trade conditions and wage levels'.[53] Second, the size of the national pool of skilled labour was impossible to control as the

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[50] Chase, *Early Trade Unionism*, p. 61.
Hobsbawm, 'Tramping Artisan', pp. 35-36. Leeson, *Travelling Brothers*, pp. 21-55. Rule,
[51] *Formative Years*, inside front cover.
[52] HCJ XXI, p. 824.
[53] *HG*, 'The Journeymen Felt Hatters' Society, A Retrospect by an Old Hatter', 2/5/1887.
Rule, *Formative Years*, inside front cover.

large number of small masters scattered over the country continually made up journeymen for whom they had no employment.[54]

In 1771, one of a series of hatters' congresses joining local trade clubs from 'more than a dozen provincial towns' with those of Southwark and the West End of London, sought through better regulation to stave off unemployment.[55] From 1772, these 'combinations ... became extremely vigorous'.[56] A wage increase was obtained in 1775.[57] Changes were made to the hatter's tramping relief with the introduction of *blanks* which were both a 'kind of passport and a certificate of good character' within the trade.[58] The provincial towns were not named, but it is most likely that the Bristol area was involved as it had been an integral part of the tramping network for at least sixty years. Any involvement would provide an early example of local trade organisation. *Blanks*, endorsed by local journeymen, were formally adopted in 1798, but in use much earlier as *asking cards*. Local men wanted evidence of entitlement to curtail men who avoided work by constant travelling.[59]

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[54] *HG*, 'Retrospect', 2/5/1887.
[55] There were also Congresses in 1772, 1775 and 1777, held in London with a strong local bias, which enacted 'byelaws' for the whole trade. In 1775, a wage increase was obtained. The Webbs saw the Congresses as 'very largely for the purpose of maintaining and enforcing the statutory limitation of apprentices' (Webbs, *Trade Unionism*), pp. 28-29. The Webbs cite part of the *Place Manuscript* (BL, 27799-68), but this particular document has not been found.
[56] George Howell, *The Conflicts of Labour historically and economically considered being a History and Review of the Trade Unions of Great Britain* (1878; second edition London, Macmillan, 1890), p. 83.
[57] Webbs, *Trade Unionism*, p. 28.
[58] Leeson, *Travelling Brothers*, pp. 17, 126.
[59] *HG*, 'Retrospect', 2/5/1887. Leeson, *Travelling Brothers*, p. 15. Housley, *Development*, Vol. 1, p. 116. Housley, in 1929, was able to conduct personal interviews with many of the hatters' union leaders who were personally involved in nineteenth century trade union activity: T Mallalieu, secretary, *The Amalgamated Society of Journeymen Felt Hatters*; T Thorpe, district secretary, *TASJFH*, Denton; W Moss and T Walmsley, secretary, *The British Felt Hat Manufacturers' Association*; George Simms & J Hall, officials of the Feltmakers' Trade Union,

The importance of tramping to the hatters, like the ironfounders and the boilermakers, was such that they built their emblem around it and it can regularly be found at the top of union correspondence or on one side of *blanks*. Just one survives for the region, dated 1810, and issued by the 'Associated Feltmakers of Winterbourne' to Charles Brown who was 'clear of all shop dues and demands and is worthy of a *gown*'. The stewards who endorsed the back were prominent local hatters.[60] The etching shows the tramping hatter welcomed to the *turn-house* by the publican and his wife, who holds a pot of beer. Most usually, for the emblem was also widely-used nationally as a trade letterhead, St Paul's Cathedral can be seen through the window. The scene is decorated by sheep, beaver, rabbits and hats.

Figure 89: Hatter's blank of Charles Brown, 1810.

The hatter's tramping system along with its textile cousins was, from the start, designed to meet seasonal or irregular unemployment. There was no

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London. Much nineteenth century hatting union material was thrown away in the 1970s (Private conversation, Peter Carter, 2005).

[60] BRO, 43454/1, PicBox/7A/Trade/1, 23/2/1810.

evidence of a continental *Tour de France* or *Wanderpflicht* to apply the 'final polish in the craftsman's education'.[61] Other later uses included giving strike relief and safeguarding against victimisation: 'The man who got a temporary job while the fight was on was a great asset'.[62]

By 1816, the blank system was said to be universal in England and extended to Scotland and Ireland.[63] For some men, tramping became a way of life and this was recognised in one of the laws of the hatting trade in 1819.[64] A *fair* man, one who has been properly apprenticed, has

> the privilege of what is called *turns upon tramp,* that is, if he cannot work within the town where he resides, or has an inclination to *travel,* he may journey or *tramp* to the next; should any of the *fraternity* be there and he wishes to get *shopped* he is *asked for* by one in the factory (no man being allowed to ask for himself); if unsuccessful, there are two nights' lodging for him, two pots of strong beer, bread and cheese, and a shilling or two to forward him to the next town. The *money turn* in London is five shillings, but no man is entitled to a *second* turn in one place, until after the expiration of six months from his receiving the first.[65]

As can be seen, *tramp* was a word which went 'down in the world'.[66] Mayhew recorded an interview with an old hatter who spoke of tramping before 1830,

> Many a hatter went on the tramp, and got to like the life, when he needn't have gone, if he'd looked out fairly for work ... I had 1½d a

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[61] E J Hobsbawm, *Labouring Men: Studies in the History of Labour* (London, Weidenfeld and Nicholson 1964), pp. 36-37.
[62] Hobsbawm, *Labouring Men*, p. 40.
[63] *Manchester Mercury*, 8/10/1816. Giles, 'Felt-Hatting', p. 121.
[64] Lloyd, *Treatise on Hats.*
[65] Appendix 59: *Laws and customs of journeymen hatters, 1819.*
[66] Turner, *First Shop*, p. 109.

> mile, and a bed at every 'lawful town'. Sometime if the society's house, which was always a public house, was small and full I had half a bed for other societies used the house, and I have slept with tailors, and curriers, and other trades on tramp ... I know plenty of men in different trades that wouldn't thank you for work – they liked tramping better.[67]

The normality of tramping is emphasised by two hatting neighbours in Newfoundland Road, Bristol, who extended their families as they moved around the country.[68] Thomas Wadley was a thirty-five-year-old Reading-born journeyman hatter; his wife Mary, a hat crown maker, born in Newcastle-under-Lyme. Thomas and Mary had four children over ten years, one each born in Newcastle-under-Lyme, Denton, Bradford and Manchester. The family was in Newcastle-upon-Tyne ten years later. Next door was hatter James Nicholson, born in Manchester with a wife from Cumberland and a daughter from Bristol.[69] The four Betty brothers of Bristol were in search of work or, perhaps, running away as two of them had second 'wives'. Their stopping places included Denton; Heckmondwike, Yorkshire; Lambeth, Clerkenwell, Pentonville, St Pancras and Strand in London; Nottingham; Sheffield; Warwick; and Worcester.[70]

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[67] Mayhew, 'Labour and the Poor', Vol. 6, 1850, pp. 161-162. For the disinclination of men from country workshops to maximise their earnings, Daunton, *Progress and Poverty*, pp. 179-180.

[68] Another example concerns 155 journeymen hatters in the hatting centre of Atherstone in Warwickshire in 1851 who almost all married local women. Of the married men, 52% were local, while the remainder came from Staffordshire, eight; Lancashire, five; Birmingham, two; and one each from Hanham and Winterbourne in Gloucestershire, Cheshire, Salop, Scotland and Yorkshire (1851 census, courtesy of Harry Duckworth 2011).

[69] 1851-61 Censuses.

[70] Chris Heal, 'Betty Brothers – Bristol Hatters', *Journal of the BAFHS*, No. 134, December 2008, pp. 61-65.

The 1833-1834 Articles of the Hatters' Union of Great Britain and Ireland gave their regional secretaries and stewards a guide number of days allowed for travel in order to make regular payments to strangers.[71] There were twenty-two centres including *Winterbourn* (W) and *Oldlands Common* (OC):

Destination	From	Days
Atherston	W / OC	5
Birmingham	W / OC	4
Cork	W	Blank#
'Four Districts'[72]	W	10
Launceston	W / OC	6
London	OC	6
Newcastle [under-Lyme]	W	7
Shrewsbury	W / OC	6

Article XXIV: 'All strangers passing from Bristol to any part of Ireland shall be paid 5s'.

Table 8: Guide days and payments for tramping hatters, 1833.

The rate of payment for tramping from Oldland Common in 1859, near the very end of the trade there, was set in shillings:

Atherstone	6
Bristol	1[73]
Birmingham	5
Leicester	6
London	6

Table 9: Tramping payments for hatters, 1859.[74]

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[71] Articles of the Hatters' Union of Great Britain and Ireland, instituted 16/4/1833, revised 13/4/1839 (Oldham Public Library, 53 HA4, 1839); also revised at London 28/2/1842 as the Society of Journeymen Hatters (Oldham Public Library, 53 HA5); Public Order, Discontent and Protest 1820-1850 (TNA, HO 52; University of Bristol, Arts and Social Sciences Library, Microfilm reel 27, Box 25, 1834), p. 245.

[72] Named as Carlisle, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

[73] 'The amount given was originally fixed at 1s 4d a day, and the amount paid a man going from any one district to another was embodied in a list, which is still recognised. A man going from London to Bristol receives 8s; it was a six days' journey' (Booth, *Portrait of the Poor*), pp. 39-40.

[74] Housley, *Development*, p. 121.

Steady development by the hatters from local action group to fully-fledged trade union is well exemplified by national legislation.[75] *Combination* first entered the statute book in 1721 as the legal name for labour organisations when disturbances by the tailors over the South Sea Company's failure was quickly followed by the prosecution of journeymen for criminal conspiracy.[76] Earlier statutes labelled organisations as *conspiracies* or *confederacies*. John Orth found that 'all the names were bad'. In Union – in which there is strength – lay the answer, but *trade union*, both as a popular name and as a legal appellation, did not arrive until well into the nineteenth century.[77]

Strikes and violence by weavers precipitated legislation in 1726 covering the wool and jersey combers, weavers, framework knitters and stockingers. This act also dealt further with the problem of *truck*, wage payment in compulsory goods in kind rather than money.[78] In 1749, the long-running dispute in the hat industry over *bugging* came to a head. Journeymen hatters customarily exchanged some of the dearest manufacturing materials, often beaver, for others of less value.[79] 'Bugging is stealing the *bever*.'[80] Despite legislation, the

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[75] This section deals only with legislation affecting working combinations and practices before 1800.

[76] 7 George I, c. 13, (1721). Francis Place described the tailors as having an organisation as a 'perfect and perpetual combination' in which orders from an 'executive' reached upwards of twenty delegate-sending 'houses of call' (Rule, *Labouring Classes*, cites F W Galton, *Select Documents Illustrating the History of Trade Unionism: The Tailoring Trade*, 1896), pp. 5-73.

[77] Orth, *Combination*, pp. 5-6.

[78] 12 George I, c. 34 (1726). Orth, *Combination*, fn. 70 and p. 11.

[79] Craig Becker, 'Property in the Workplace: Labour, Capital, and Crime in the Eighteenth-Century British Woolen and Worsted Industry', *Virginia Law Review*, Vol. 69, 1983, pp. 1487-1515; John Styles, 'Embezzlement, Industry and the Law in England, 1500-1800' in *Manufacture in town and country*; Pollard, *Genesis*, p. 47.

[80] Captain Francis Grose, *A Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue*, edited E Partridge (1796, third edition, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul 1963), p. 58. This substitution makes

practice continued into the nineteenth century. The Bristol hatting community, and two of the London hat masters with manufactories in South Gloucestershire, were involved. In 1789, hatter Robert Short of Oldland Common admitted slandering workmen employed by Bazley's, Bristol hat manufacturers, by charging them with bugging and other crimes. 'I ... humbly hope for forgiveness ... promising never to be guilty of the like again.'[81] The following year George Vaughan's London men took out 'the finest and most valuable materials, and put in coarse, inferior stuff by which wicked practice their masters suffer considerable loss in their trade and reputation'. Out of eighty-six men in Vaughan's employment only ten stood out against the practice and in a 'most dangerous and alarming conspiracy' the ten were fined five guineas each by their workmates who then all left Vaughan's shop.[82] William Mayhew examined a recently made hat by blowing into the nap, looked the workman, Thomas, in the face with an 'unmistakable meaning glance', looked at the hat a second time, and then told him that he was given 'beaver to put on these hats, and, of course, I expected that you would do so, but I find that you have been at your old game by having substituted a portion of the beaver with hare's wool; if you do this trick again, it will be your last chance of ever working on these premises'.[83]

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the 'master hatters great and daily sufferers by the journeymen' (HCJ, Vol. 36, 18/2/1777), pp. 192-3.

[81] Letter from Robert Short, hatter of Wollens Common, the old name for Oldland Common (*FFBJ*, 18/4/1789).

[82] *Woodfall's Register*, 2/12/1790.

[83] *HG*, 1/6/1889.

The vehicle chosen in 1749 to deal with *bugging* was the first weaver's combination act of 1726. The revised act included 'almost as an afterthought' felt-makers and hatters and many other trades in the clothing industry.[84] All were 'subject to the anti-combination and anti-truck provisions that had earlier only applied to weavers'.[85]

The word *strike* to signify withdrawal of labour is attributed to the hatters in 1768: 'This day the hatters struck, and refused to work till their wages were raised'.[86] The first great national confrontation between the hat manufacturers and their journeymen came in 1777. It was started by London-based masters whose number included James Rossiter, of Somerset family and the biggest hat exporter of the day; Thomas Davis, who bought Rossiter's business with Bristol capital; George Vaughan, whose son was shortly to set up in Frampton Cotterell; and John Collinson, Vaughan's partner.[87] Their petition said they were 'under many difficulties in carrying on their Manufactories by reason of the great Scarcity of Journeymen'. They criticised demands for unreasonable wages and lower hours; the power of the hatters' Congresses to limit apprenticeships, to charge a 2d levy and to fine employers, to 'compel the most industrious Part of the whole to quit the Service of those who will not submit'; and the continuing embezzlement of hat materials. The 1749 act

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[84] 22 George II, c. 27 (1749) also included dyers, hot-pressers and all persons employed in the manufacture of silk, mohair, fur, hemp, flax leather, linen, cotton, fustian, iron and leather.
[85] Orth, *Combination*, p. 15. Lipson, *Economic History*, Vol. 3, pp. 407-408.
[86] *Annual Register*, 1768 (*Oxford English Dictionary*, second edition 1989, available http://dictionary.oed.com, accessed 2009-2010). Also quoted in Webbs, *Trade Unionism*, fn. 1, p. 461. Dobson, *Masters and Journeymen*, p. 19, cites *St James Chronicle* 5-7, 7-10/5/1768.
[87] French v Davies, 1794 (TNA, C 12/1263/19). Winterbourne Land Tax Assessment, Langley and Swinehead Hundred (GA, Q/Rel). *The Times*, 21/2/1797.

proved inefficient in securing convictions.[88] Alderman Harley, a friend to the manufacturers and with long experience of the trade, was charged with the parliamentary investigation.[89] If Harley was in any doubt about the effectiveness of the hatters' organisation, the response from the country would have disabused him. A flood of petitions from journeymen arrived on Harley's desk citing Elizabethan and Jacobean apprenticeship laws and charging the manufacturers with wishing to overstock the trade with workers who would be placed on reduced wages or cast aside in lean times.[90] Bristol's petitioners included apprenticed-served masters and journeymen feltmakers resident 'in and about' the city who had 'by close application and industry been enabled comfortably to support themselves and families for many years past', but because of the great number of journeymen in the trade 'many of them are at present wholly unemployed and are obliged to work in coal pits and to serve as labourers'.[91] They claimed 1,325 men relieved in the area and, if the restrictions on apprentices were repealed, their parishes would be 'prejudiced'.[92] The year before, Adam Smith took the existence of workers' combinations for granted, as he did conflict between labour and capital.[93] 'Employees were disposed to collective action to raise the price of their labour, while employers combined to lower wages'.[94]

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[88] HCJ, Vol. 36, p. 119, 5-6/2/1777.
[89] HCJ, Vol. 29, p. 761, 27/1/1764, pp. 905-907, 5/3/1764.
[90] 8 Elizabeth, c. 11 (1565); 1 Jacob 1, c. 17 (1604).
[91] Other petitions were received, in order, from Newcastle under *Line*, London, Burton upon Trent, Ashby de la Zouch, Packington, Coleton, Manchester, Chester, Liverpool and Derby (HCJ, Vol. 35, pp. 280, 281, 287-288, 307, 447).
[92] HCJ, Vol. 36, p. 307.
[93] Smith, *Wealth* (Radford, Virginia, Wilder 2008), pp. 74-75.
[94] Rule, *Labouring Classes*, p. 256.

Early in 1777, all the journeymen of one Manchester employer turned out to compel the discharge of finishers who had not joined their combination.[95] Three journeymen were sent to prison for ten weeks and the masters placed an advert declaring that, before employment, hatters must sign a declaration promising

> that we will not submit to any pretended Laws made by a Congress, Committee or any writing from any pretended Laws made by a Congress, Committee or any other Combination of Piece-Makers, or Journeymen ... nor will we in any respect be concerned in Turnouts, or paying to the Support of any Hatters who have turned out, or shall hereafter turn out against either Masters or Workmen, and that we will neither pay any Fines imposed on us by any Congress, Committee or Combination, not be concerned in levying of Fines, but in all Things confirm to the several Acts of Parliament now in being for the Regulation of the said Trade.[96]

The masters that year gained a trade-wide statutory prohibition of combinations.[97] The Bristol petitioners' reliance on aged apprentice laws came unstuck: restrictions in both were repealed; but a modest concession required masters to employ one journeyman for each apprentice.[98] The new law was draconian: to attend an illegal meeting, to solicit attendance or money, to endeavour to persuade another to quit work, to give money for an

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[95] Wadsworth, Mann, *Cotton Trade*, pp. 381-382.
[96] *Manchester Mercury*, 4/2/1777. Housley, *Development*, Vol. 1, p. 34.
[98] 17 George III, c. 55 (1777).
Rule, *Experience of Labour*, pp. 156-157.

illegal club – all were made punishable by three months' imprisonment either in the common gaol or at hard labour.[99]

All of which meant very little to hatters in Manchester and London as they carried on perhaps worse than before. Around Bristol, seemingly, the 1777 act came to mean even less. In the twenty years leading to Pitt's Combination Acts at least a dozen strikes, many of them violent, and all centred on wages, apprentices or the employment of *foul men* were all recorded away from Bristol where none have been found.[100] In 1780, journeymen were prosecuted at Manchester by their masters and nine of the principals sentenced to six weeks' imprisonment. In 1785 the men took steps to restrict the numbers of apprentices and the masters retaliated by offering 'preference to those who refused to pay to the clubs'. At a Manchester and Stockport turnout the masters declared that, as they had been prevented from taking the apprentices they required, the trade was 'free immediately to take such a number of apprentices as we may chose'. The journeymen replied that the masters were 'creating imaginary difficulties where none really exist, and throwing obstacles in the way of reconciliation'.[101]

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[99] The hatters did get one other concession: Examination was to be made by two justices of the peace, not one as before, and to ensure procedural fair play, masters who were also justices of the peace were excluded (Orth, *Combination*), pp. 18-19.

[100] Appendix 60: *Hatters' strikes, 1697-1907.*

[101] Dobson, *Masters and Journeymen,* p. 382, which includes reports from *Manchester Mercury*, 5/4/1785; *Manchester Chronicle*, 19/11, 6/12/1785. The hat finishers were again on strike in 1791 (*Manchester Mercury*, 19/7/1791).

The best previous national strike list is in Dobson which he culled from the London press and which records four hatters' withdrawals between 1761-1780 and three between 1781-1800; compared with ten and eight in a new list of seventy-nine hatters' strike, discussed shortly.[102] All were prosecuted under the appropriate combination act of 1749, 1777 or 1799/1800.[103]

It was this apparent lack of conflict in South Gloucestershire after 1777 that encouraged the move to the region of so many of the London hat manufacturers over the end of the eighteenth century. In 1794, for instance, in the middle of a strike, Vaughan's advertised for upwards of thirty 'sober and good' indoor journeyman hatmakers. 'Men direct from the country would be preferred and on their going to work will have a premium given them exceeding their customary turn allowance of six shillings.' The master hat manufacturers had at least two short-notice, general meetings in August that year at the King's Head Tavern in London's Poultry to discuss 'exorbitant demands' for wages.[104] Vaughan was certainly unhappy about the hindrance of the capital's hatters. The advert for journeymen concluded that the 'tyrannical and oppressive fine of five guineas, imposed by the journeymen in London, on the countrymen coming to work in London, is abolished, and all dues whatever'.[105]

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[102] Dobson, *Masters and Journeymen*, p. 24. Appendix 60: *Hatters' strikes, 1697-1907.*
[103] Combination Acts: 39 George III, c. 81 (1799); 39-40 George III, c. 106 (1800). Orth, *Combination*, Appendix 1, pp. 156-161.
[104] *Oracle and Public Advertiser*, 20, 25/8/1794.
[105] Advertisement from London (*Manchester Advertiser*, 14/10/1794, copied from *Johnson's Sunday Monitor*, London, 28/9, 5/10/1794).

Other trades were singled out for anti-combination laws, a second tailor's act in 1768, silk weavers 1773 and 1792, and papermakers 1796.[106] This last, based among others on the hatters' act of 1777, was the 'inspiration for the Combinations Acts' of 1799 and 1800.[107] The detail of the acts is not needed here, but some aspects are of regional interest and its context is important for what happened in the 1820s and 1830s. The parliamentary debate brought to the fore William Wilberforce, Gloucestershire landowner, abolitionist, and vice-president of the first 'national' school in the hatters' centre of Winterbourne.[108] Wilberforce regarded combinations as a 'general disease in society for which the remedy should be general' and it was this 'historic' intervention that was eventually taken up by Pitt.[109] Playwright and MP Richard Sheridan made a slashing attack on the proposed legislation as 'pregnant with the foulest injustice,' 'replete with the grossest aggression against the principles of the law of the land and against the rights of the subject'.[110]

The first act of 1799 was rushed through a Parliament in fear of revolution and invasion. Many workmen did not hear of it till afterwards. Petitions then arrived including from the journeymen and workmen 'residing in and about' both Bristol and Bath and from the hatters of Lancaster.[111] The first act was 'cleaned and softened' in 1800, especially in the prohibition of masters acting

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[106] D C Coleman, *The British Paper Industry 1495-1860, A Study in Industrial Growth* (OUP 1958), pp. 262-264, 272.
[107] Orth, *Combination*, p. 19. 39 George III, c. 81 (1799) and 39&40 George III, c. 106 (1800).
[108] Elliott, *Winterbourne*, p. 51.
[109] A Aspinall, *The Early English Trade Unions: Documents from the Home Office Papers in the Public Record Office* (London, Batchworth Press 1949), pp. x-xi. Orth, *Combination*, p. 22.
[110] Parliamentary Register, Vol. lvii, pp. 218-224. Aspinall, *Trade Unions*, p. xiii.
[111] HCJ, Vol. 55, 17/6/1800, p. 665; 19/6/1800, p. 672.

as justices which was copied from the hatters' 1777 act.[112] Francis Place said the laws

> ... were not so much the consequence of the desire to keep the people in an abject state of subjection to their employers, as of a persuasion that they enabled those employers to get their work done at less expense. Justice was entirely out of the question; the working man could seldom obtain a hearing before a magistrate – never without impatience and insult; and never could they calculate on even an approximation of a rational conclusion.[113]

The Times was quite clear that 'one of the first acts of the Imperial Parliament would be the prevention of conspiracies among journeymen tradesmen to raise their wages. 'All benefit clubs and societies are to be immediately suppressed.'[114] Hilton felt that the 'rising sense of panic, especially but not only among the propertied classes, was magnified by Government

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[112] The Hammonds saw the 'most unqualified surrender of the State to the discretion of a class in the history of England' (*The Skilled Labourer, 1760-1832*, 1919, reprint London, Longmans, Green 1995), pp. 80, 89. The Webbs were equally damning: 'To the ordinary politician a combination of employers and a combination of workmen seemed in no way comparable. The former was at most an industrial misdemeanour; the latter was in all cases a political crime. Under the shadow of the French Revolution, the English governing classes regarded all associations of the common people with the utmost alarm. In this general terror lest insubordination should develop into rebellion were merged both the capitalist's objection to high wages and the politician's dislike of Democratic institutions' (Webbs, *Trade Unionism*), p. 73. Also Hilton, *A Mad, Bad, and Dangerous People? England 1783-1846* (Oxford, Clarendon Press 2006), p. 65; Chase, *Early Trade Unionism*, pp. 72, 83; Orth, *Combination*, p. 197. The Combination Acts were part of a stream of restrictive legislation: Treasonable and Sedition Practices and the Seditious Meetings and Assemblies Bills (1795); in the wake of naval mutinies, the Seduction from Duty and Allegiance Act (1797); two Newspaper Publications Acts (1798-1799); Administering Unlawful Oaths (1797); and an Act for the more Effective Suppressions of Societies established for Seditious and Treasonable Purposes (1799). As Hilton explained, 'Political prisoners were pilloried, shipped out to Botany Bay, or sentenced to two years in prison, but very few were hanged' (*Mad, Bad*), p. 72.

[113] Graham Wallas, *The Life of Francis Place 1771-1854*, revised edition (London, Allen and Unwin 1918), p. 198.

[114] *The Times*, 7/1/1801.

manipulation'.[115] Three junior ministers masterminded Press propaganda.[116] One of them, Bristol-born Francis Freeling, ran the Post Office from 1797-1836 and through it a large national spy network.[117] Many letters to Gloucestershire were opened and reports made from Bristol Post Office to Freeling and other Government figures in London.[118] Francis Ronaldson of Stockport sought for Freeling to discover evidence of insurrection among the hatters and sent him copies of trade tramping correspondence.[119]

Box clubs and benefit and friendly societies flourished among artisans since the seventeenth century as 'efforts to guard against calamities arising out of accident, sickness and old age, to meet the age old desire to have a decent funeral, and to avoid the stigma attached to poor relief'.[120] Defoe in 1697 saw a 'number of people entering into a mutual compact to help one another in case any disaster or distress fall upon them. He found friendly societies 'very extensive'.[121] Eden summarised that 'in the association of the many, the few may be assisted'.[122]

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[115] 'Surviving secret service accounts reveal that in the early 1790s the Government spent about £5,000 a year on press subsidies, and that the two alarmist newspapers, the Sun and True Briton, were both started with ministerial help in 1792-1793' (Hilton, *Mad, Bad*), p. 65.
[116] George Rose, Treasury; Bland Burges, Foreign Office; and Francis Freeling, Post Office.
[117] Freeling was born in 1764, the son of a journeyman sugar baker. His marble memorial is in St Mary Redcliffe, Bristol (G B Smith, 'Freeling, Sir Francis' revised Jean Ferrugia, *ODNB*, OUP, 2004, online May 2007, accessed September 2010).
[118] For instance, John Jones, junior, to Lord Pelham, 27/7/1802 (TNA, HO 42/65, in Aspinall, *Trade Unions*, No. 47), p. 44. There are over 350 reports and letters (TNA, HO 33 and following).
[119] 1/6/1812 (Aspinall, *Trade Unions*, No. 121), p. 121.
[120] Iorwerth Prothero, *Artisans & Politics in Early Nineteenth-Century London, John Gast and His Times* (Folkestone, Dawson 1979), p. 28. Friendly Society of Bethnal Green founded in 1687 (P H J H Gosden, *The Friendly Societies in England 1815-1875* (MUP 1961), p. 2.
[121] Defoe, *Projects*, pp. 59-61. *Select Committee*, John Lang, Third Report, 2/3/1824, pp. 91-92.
[122] Sir Frederick Morton Eden, *The State of the Poor, or an History of the Labouring Classes in England from the Conquest to the Present Period* (London, White 1797), Vol. 1, p. 590.

As ever, the hatters' neighbours, the West Country weavers, set a vigorous example. Bristol's journeymen formed a 'confederacy' in 1707 to enforce apprenticeship rules. Employers in the West of England several times affirmed that trade was 'very much incommoded' by 'riotous and tumultuous clubs and societies of workmen'.[123] One parliamentary witness deposed that weavers had many clubs in the West of England where they made by-laws constituting officers, arranging places of meeting at which 'ensigns and flags' were openly displayed, fixing wages, and making allowances to unemployed workmen on travel.[124] Minchinton thought this was the natural way as the clubs, unskilled in 'advantages of negotiation', tried to attain their ends by the use of violence as a 'means of calling attention to grievances which were neither clearly formatted nor articulate'. After the rioting and destruction of property in Bristol in 1707, weavers broke machines in the city in 1728, followed by their most prolonged display of force in the strike of 1756.[125]

In the first half of the eighteenth century, industrial disputes emerged between the masters and recognised journeymen's clubs, among them, claimed Chase, the hatters.[126] The first record in South Gloucestershire of a hatters' benefit society, the Worthy Society of Felt-makers, is in a newspaper in 1761, and it is a peaceful occasion.[127]

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[123] HCJ, XV, p. 312; XVIII, 715 (1718); XX, (1724), p. 268, cited in Lipson, *Economic History*, Vol. 3, p. 393.
[124] HCJ, XX, pp. 647-648. Lipson, *Economic History*, p. 394. Rule, *Experience of Labour*, p. 159. Dobson, *Masters and Journeymen*, p. 341.
[125] W E Minchinton, 'Trade Unionism', pp. 130-131.
[126] Chase, *Early Trade Unionism*, p. 43.
[127] *FFBJ*, 16/5/1761.

> We hear from Frampton Cotterell ... that on Whit-Monday last was held the Anniversary Meeting of the Society of Felt-makers, &c. lately incorporated there for the Relief and Support of their poor indigent Brethren, and other laudable purposes : When they all (to the Amount of Seventy and upwards) assembled in the Morning at their Club-Room, from whence they walked in Procession, with white Wands in their Hands, round the Parish, preceded with Musick playing, and a Person carrying a well cock'd Hat on a Poll, adorn'd with Ribbonds, &c. as a Badge of their Profession : And about Noon they proceeded to Church to hear Divine Service ... after which they returned in the same order to their Club Room, to partake of a plain but good Dinner prepared for the Purpose, and regaled themselves in a decent and becoming Manner.

Here is a trade club in a single village, recently formed, perhaps about 1760, with its own club room capable of providing a dinner for seventy members.[128] The New Inn, almost next door to the church was one of the few places likely to be able to handle a sitting of this size.[129] It has further feltmaker connections and may also have been the village turn-house. The club was promoted in the newspaper as an example to be followed suggesting that like organisations were not over common in local manufacturing districts.[130]

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[128] 'All and every member of this Society shall attend at the house where the Society is held, on the morning of the feast day, in due time, to walk in procession to hear divine service, except sickness, lameness, or being at a distance of twenty miles, on the forfeiture of 1s or be excluded' (Eden, 'Rules of a Friendly Society in Stapleton, 9/5/1797, Rule 30', *State of the Poor*), Vol. II, pp. 210-215.

[129] John Moore states that the New Inn (now 2-4, Mill Lane, Frampton Cotterell) was the meeting place of the Friendly Society; the Society collapsed in the 1850s when the publican of the New Inn, also treasurer of the Society, absconded with the Society funds (private 2012).

[130] 'This is inserted as a Means to stir up a like laudable and commendable Practice in all other Manufacturing Places' (FFBJ, 16/5/1761).

Each society marched on its chosen feast day, often Whit Monday.[131] It was common practice for society members to return to 'their club house for dinner in the same orderly manner required for the walk to church, usually taking a fairly long route so as to include a tour of the district'.[132] The men carried 'white wands' and a 'well cock'd Hat on a Poll'. Wands were a regular part of society ritual and were a focal point of trade union oaths which came to the fore, for instance, in the Tolpuddle prosecutions eighty years later. Initiates were pressed by swords, blindfolds and religious texts to understand that 'betrayal [to their oath] merited death ... and eternal damnation'. The ecclesiastical atmosphere was important: the surplices and *wands* of the officers, the rather Episcopal role of the presiding officer, and the Bible upon its cushion. These men were 'not play-acting: they were performing a ritual with due seriousness'.[133] Cole saw the administration of oaths as 'for the most part confined to [older] societies of skilled craftsmen'.[134] The 'well cock'd hat', perhaps, provides a good indication of some of the manufactures of Frampton Cotterell in the mid-eighteenth century.[135]

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[132] Eden, Rule 27, *State of the Poor.*
[133] Fuller, *Friendly Societies*, p. 103.
W H Oliver, 'Tolpuddle Martyrs and Trade Union Oaths', *Labour History*, No. 10, May 1966, p. 10. Also Edward Carleton Tufnell, *Character, Object and Effects of Trades' Unions; with some remarks on the law concerning them,* British Labour Struggles: Contemporary Pamphlets 1727-1850 (London, Ridgway 1834, reprint New York, Arno Press, 1972), pp. 66-73.
[134] G D H Cole, *Attempts at General Union, A Study in Trade Union History 1818-1834* (London, Macmillan 1953), p. 74.
[135] The 'Cocked' or 'Three-Cornered hat', or rather the 'Cocking of the Wide-brimmed hat', was the most characteristic style of the eighteenth century. It is possible to 'cock' (attach a part of the brim to the top of the hat) with one, two, three or, even, four flaps (Harrison, *Hat*), pp. 149-151.

By the turn of the century it was common for all members to carry a pole (poll) or rod. Brass knobs or emblems at the top of staves were peculiar to West Country societies. Occasionally wooden or iron emblems were used. The poles varied in length between four and eight feet and were painted, either in a single colour or in stripes of several colours, frequently bearing the initials of the name of the owner.[136] An undated brass pole head from Frampton Cotterell - flat, mitre-shaped with a diamond, heart and triangle cut-out - is today kept by the *Museum of English Rural Life*. In the collection is a splendid example from Mangotsfield of two gentlemen with tall hats shaking hands. Other poll heads from the hatting villages of Bitton, Hanham, Kingswood, Pucklechurch, Siston, Soundwell, Stapleton, Wick, Willsbridge and Winterbourne are also there.[137]

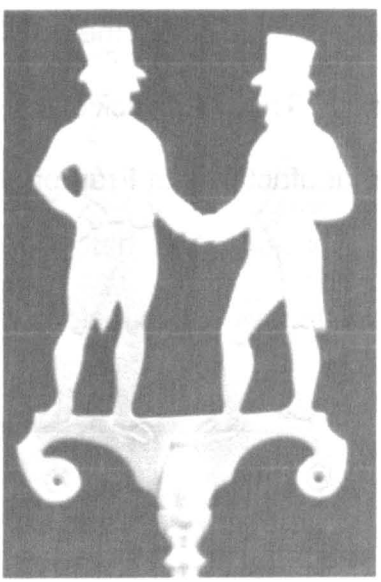

Figure 90: Poll head, Mangotsfield's *Salutation Inn*, possibly host to a hatters' club, c. 1795.[138]

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[136] Fuller, *Friendly Societies*, p. 94.
[137] Museum of English Rural Life, University of Reading *Shickle collection*.
[138] Museum of English Rural Life, No. 683/P/DX/1084/28.1.

The comment about 'decent and becoming manner' may have been carefully inserted to counter the hatters' reputation for all day drinking.[139]

Friendly, or Benefit, Societies were given legal status in a 1793 Act when 'any number of persons' were permitted 'to form themselves into ... Societies of good fellowship ... to secure voluntary subscriptions ... for the mutual relief and maintenance ... in old age, sickness and infirmity or for the relief of widows and children of deceased members ... and at the same time diminish the public burthens'.[140] Under the Act, societies were asked to file their rules with the Clerk of the Peace for each county. Gloucestershire's Quarter Sessions records almost 300 societies, giving their name, foundation date and meeting place, usually an inn.[141] Forty of these come from hatter villages and two, at least, are directly connected with the industry while others were held in hatter-owned public houses or were included in cross-trade societies.[142]

In Frampton Cotterell in 1799 is the Worthy Society of Felt Makers, who met at the New Inn; a close connection with the Society of Felt-makers of 1761 is probable. The Friendly Society of the Queen's Head, Willsbridge, was formed

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[139] 'The journeymen hatters are rather notorious for being fond of drink, they are generally speaking, men who do not work six days in the week, probably on average, not more than four or five days out of six' (*Select Committee*, George Ravenhill, London hat manufacturer and Chairman of the London Masters, Second Report, 1/3/1824), p. 86. 'The makers were a rough and ready set of men, sadly wanting in feelings of self-respect, and regardless of public opinion and these traits in their character, were not improved by their love of drink' (*HG*, 'The State of the Felt Hat Trade in the Early Part of the Century', Specially Contributed, 1/11/1886), p. 634.

[140] Friendly Societies Act: 33 George III, c. 54 (1793), also called the Rose Act after George Rose, Secretary to the Treasury, who sponsored it. Fuller, *Friendly Societies*, p. 8.

[141] *A list of Friendly Societies whose rules have been transmitted to the Registrar, 1750-1828* (GA, QRSf/2, 1856, Gloucester Quarter Sessions).

[142] Appendix 61: *Hatters' friendly societies, 1764-1870.* Fuller, *Friendly Societies*, pp. 132-150. Minchinton, 'Trade Unionism', p. 128. Full rules have not been found in the BRO or TNA.

in 1797.[143] The pub, close to the prominent hatting area of Oldland Common, was bought by George Burgess in 1790 for £205. George's son, George junior, was a felt hatmaker who, from about 1810, 'made his factory in the house nearest to Mill Clack Brook in his father's rank' [of cottages]. Burgess senior presided over the Society's box of funds, 'keeping it securely locked in his office'.[144] Burgess, the landlord, had much to gain from the arrangement as the club always purchased a certain amount of drink, and bread and cheese, at its monthly meetings, and brought a measure of prestige and publicity to the house.[145] George junior was also a member of Hanham Vestry, which sometimes met at the pub from his father's time, and he was more than once elected Vestry overseer.[146] Amongst the written Resolves of Oldland Vestry, references are made to some poor seeking aid who were also in 'the club'.[147] The Oldland overseers, including many prominent hatters like unionist George Ollis, were anxious to keep individuals in 'the club' as their own poor relief funds were inadequate. It was the role of the Society's stewards to investigate claims for financial assistance, and none would be given if a member's circumstances were considered to be self induced through fighting, gambling, drunkenness or venereal disease.

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[143] A *Queen's Head* pole head or brass still exists and is designed, unsurprisingly, as a queen's head with crown (Museum of English Rural Life, Shickle Collection).
[144] Lydia Wells, *Time-Honoured Cheer, A History of The Queen's Head Public House, Willsbridge* (Private, second edition, 1995), p. 28; working files (BRO, 4165217).
[145] Wells, *Queen's Head*, pp. 31-33.
[146] The Vestry was a committee in the ecclesiastical parish that carried out administrative duties covering death, health and welfare, as well as collecting chapel rates (Wells, *Queen's Head*), p. 18.
[147] BRO, P/K/V/1 transcript, also Bk/91. Both the Hanham (St George) and Oldland (St Anne's) Vestries met from time to time at the Queen's Head (BRO, P.B/X/11, c. 1810-1833, *Manuscripts of the Overseers of the Poor, Bitton*). However, compare with: '...there is not the smallest probability in their general extensive application, that [friendly societies] ever have, or ever will, diminish our poor rates but just the contrary' (Gosden, *Friendly Societies*), p. 3.

Each club member agreed to pay two or more pence a week and met weekly at an alehouse, where they spent a few pence more. The name *box club* came from a strong box or chest kept there, with 'divers locks, for the conservation of their books, [regulations and] cash'. Weekly payments were made to the 'sick or lame ... rendered incapable of working' and, on death, money for burial and for the widows or nominees.[148] The regulations of the tradesmen of Hanham were wrapped in a language borrowed from the Friendly Society Act, 'whereas sundry trades have met together to provide for the support of each other ... not willing to be buthernsome to the Parishes wherein we live ... have thought fit and convenient to join together in an orderly ... loving and brotherly Manner, to provide for the Relief of each other'. The Box required five locks and five keys; 'each steward to keep a key and the fifth to be kept by the man of the house where the Society is held'.[149] This careful and public security was important: at the Gloucestershire Assizes in 1753 a man was sentenced to death for stealing £40 from 'a Box belonging to a Society of Plush Weavers'.[150]

Alehouses were the 'most obvious locations for workers to gather'; few had homes large enough and meetings were 'neither tolerated nor tactically sensible if held in the workplace'. From simple beginnings there evolved more complex relationships between workers and the public houses they frequented. By the 1750s, these 'great and numerous societies' were a well-

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[148] Chase, *Early Trade Unionism*, pp. 56-57. Dobson, *Masters and Journeymen*, pp. 38-39.
[149] William Maitland, *History and Survey of London*, Vol. 2 (London, 1756), p. 1326.
[150] BCL, *Ellacombe Papers*, Vol. 9, p. 218.
Manchester Mercury, 17/4/1753, cited in Wadsworth, Mann, *Cotton Trade*. pp. 342-343.

established feature of London life and were 'beginning to operate as a replacement' for the guild system.[151] The Howes, one of the major families of hatters in Bristol and South Gloucestershire, began their connection with the trade as rabbit warreners in Syston and Watley's End. They became journeymen and, later, factory masters. In an extensive vertical integration, they also established many butcher's shops in the hatting villages and ran over twenty public houses across the area, some like the *White Horse* in the hamlet of Hambrook, host to known benefit clubs.[152]

On 'club night', members exchanged trade news and arranged for the jobs notified to their landlord to be filled in rotation. For the master in seasonal trades, these societies were often a 'necessary evil', acting as a combination, but at the same time keeping together a pool of labour which could be drawn on to meet fluctuations in demand.[153] However, exasperated employers were 'forever calling on the authorities to punish publicans extending their hospitality to ... meetings by depriving them of their licences'.[154] A typically hostile view saw that 'benefit clubs, holden at public houses, increase the number of those houses, and naturally lead to idleness and intemperance; that they afford commodious opportunities to foment sedition and form illegal combinations'.[155] Smith observed that 'people of the same trade seldom meet

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[151] Chase, *Early Trade Unionism*, p. 57-60. Dobson, *Masters and Journeymen*, p. 25.
[152] Parish records, Censuses 1841-1891.
[153] Dobson, *Masters and Journeymen*, p. 39.
[154] Aspinall. *Trade Unions*, p. xxiv.
[155] Board of Agriculture's General View of the Agriculture of the County of Essex in 1793, cited in Gosden, *Friendly Societies*, p. 3. P Colquhoun, *Observations and facts relative to licensed ale houses in the City of London and its environs* (London, Fry 1794), p. 31, cited in

together, even for merriment and diversion, but the conversation ends in a conspiracy against the public, or in some contrivance to raise prices'.[156]

Margaret Fuller was clear that although legislation was particularly aimed at employing friendly societies in the fight to reduce the poor rate, the 'submission of friendly society rules to the scrutiny of Justices of the Peace was also deigned to weed out undesirable trade activities'.[157] The working classes then became reluctant to give information as to whether they belonged to friendly societies.[158] On the other hand, hiding beneath the cloak of legal friendly societies allowed nascent trade unions to protect their assets from confiscation and, generally, to have a quieter life.[159] Chase felt it wrong to draw a 'rigid boundary' between types of friendly societies because many of the trade societies may well have called themselves trade unions had circumstances been different'.[160]

By 1815, with the establishment of the 300-strong hatters' 'Waterloo Club' in Winterbourne the potential existed for illegal practice; these men were on strike for wages for sixteen weeks in 1820 and locked out of the London manufactories.[161] The hatters claimed their club was 'for maintaining their sick

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Green, *Artisans to Paupers*, p. 96, called upon magistrates to refuse licences to publicans who permitted combinations of workmen or political debating clubs to meet on their premises.
[156] Smith, *Wealth*, Vol. 1, p. 194.
[157] Fuller, *Friendly Societies*, p. 11.
[158] Sir John Clapham, *An Economic History of Modern Britain*, Vol. 1 'The Early Railway Age 1820-1850' (CUP 1950), p. 210.
[159] Gosden, *Friendly Societies*, p. 9.
[160] Chase, *Early Trade Unionism*, p. 182. Gosden, *Friendly Societies*, p. 71.
[161] *The Stockport Advertiser*, 15/4/1831. Select Committee (1824), p. 76. The strike is discussed later.

and other purposes', but the scales likely fell increasingly on the side of unlawful combination. Winterbourne's club was affiliated, albeit loosely, from at least 1820 to the Manchester 'Blue Blank' union.[162] John Lang, the London hatters' secretary, himself convicted of unlawful combination in 1820, claimed before a Select Committee in 1824 that there were hatters' societies or clubs in 'almost every town in England'. At the same time, John Watkins, a London hatter, said the club to which he belonged in Borough had existed for about fifty years.[163]

The Webbs decided that in the eighteenth century the typical trade club of hatters was an 'isolated *ring* of highly skilled journeymen ... more decisively marked off from the mass of manual workers than from the small class of capitalist employers'. Their clubs provided benefits, but were also used for *higgling* with the masters for better terms.[164] Journeymen hatters retained a 'very close personal association' in the eighteenth century at least, with the masters. 'Consequently their trade union partakes more largely than is usual of the friendly society type, and acts as a court of appeal whenever the journeymen find themselves in difficulty.'[165]

James Burn, author and life-long commentator on his hat industry, wrote that by the 1800s the primary object of the hatters' societies was to establish a

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[162] Turner, *First Shop*, p. 136. Affiliation is discussed later.
[163] *Select Committee* (1824): John Lang, Secretary of the Fair Trade Union, Third Report, 2/3/1824, p. 91-2; John Watkins, Third Report, 10/3/1824, p. 252.
[164] Webbs, *Trade Unionism*, pp. 45-46.
[165] Housley, *Development*, p. 3.

'uniform scale of prices in the various towns ... and to secure the payment of the rates agreed upon, so that one employer should not have advantage over another in the market by paying less for this work'.[166] Writing later under another guise, he saw inevitability in the stop-start nature of many hatters' clubs:

> A knowledge of the economic laws, which has been the means of remodelling society during the last forty-five years, was unknown to the people, either in theory or in practice. Many attempts were made by members of the working classes to establish clubs upon friendly society principles, but in more than nine cases out of ten they were dead failures; the men had no knowledge of how to manage their financial arrangements, and they were equally ignorant of the way in which organized bodies should be conducted.[167]

By 1796, Gloucestershire had ninety-three enrolled societies (1801, 111) and, in 1803, some eight percent of the county's quarter of a million population were members of a society.[168] That year, parish overseers recorded 9,762 societies in England and Wales with a combined membership of 704,350; by 1815, Gloucestershire membership totalled 26,066.[169] From 1813, new national structures emerged whereby individual groups, including many hatters, acted in association with others under a degree of centralised control. These included the Independent Order of Oddfellows (Manchester Unity –

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[166] Burn, *Glimpse*, p. 39. Burn's many views are often trenchant, but there is no evidence to show that there is much hardening when his contemporary writing is compared to his later retrospectives. He had an unusual experience as artisan, union representative, successful author and pauper, as well as travelling and working for many years in the hatting industry in the United States.

[167] *HG*, 'Retrospect', 2/5/1887.

[168] These figures are taken from *Chatham Papers*, Bundle 309, and the *Returns relative to the expense and maintenance of the Poor, 1803-4*, cited in Fuller, *Friendly Societies*, p. 10.

[169] *Returns, 1803-4*, cited in Gosden, *Friendly Societies*, p. 5; *Abstract of Answers from Poor Law overseers, 1818*, cited in Gosden, *Friendly Societies*, p. 22.

favoured by the hatters), the Ancient Order of Foresters, and the Independent Order of Rechabites.[170] As the paths of friendly societies and the unions diverged during the nineteenth century, the links remained through individuals. In 1883, in his obituary, Mr F Cattle was reported as 'for thirty years an active worker in the ranks of the Bristol District of the Ancient Order of Foresters. He was also secretary of the Bristol District Hatters' Free Trade Union.[171]

Early hatting disputes gathered a 'reputation for labour militancy and violence'.[172] The hatters believed that they were 'defending some traditional rights or customs; and, in general, that they were supported by the wider consensus of the community'.[173] The Webbs saw the hatters [and others] as providing 'prominent instances of eighteenth-century Trade Unionism, all earned relatively high wages, and long maintained a very effectual resistance to the encroachments of their employers ... It appears to us that Trade Unionism would have been a feature of English industry, even without the steam engine and the factory system'.[174]

In 1742, the London hatters found a man allegedly working without having served an apprenticeship (in fact he served one in Oxford). They 'surrounded

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[170] Roger Logan, *An Introduction to Friendly Society Records* (Bury, Federation of Friendly Societies 2000). The Manchester Unity by 1846 had over 150,000 members of whom some 1,500 were hatters (Gosden, *Friendly Societies*), p. 74.
[171] *BM*, 28/5/1883.
[172] Green, 'Conflict', p. 219.
[173] Thompson, *Customs*, p. 188.
[174] Webbs, *Trade Unionism*, pp. 45-46.

the public house in which he was drinking, dragged him out and rode him on a rail through Southwark'. He was beaten and subsequently died.[175]

The independence of journeymen from their masters, working as they wished, was a recurrent theme. London finishers had for many years 'worked by the piece on their employer's premises but, considering eight hats a day a fair output, came and went at no fixed hours'.[176] In 1753, a foreman hatter fined a journeyman in an unlawful combination. The magistrates said that

> as this pernicious Custom hath long prevailed among the Journeymen, 'tis hoped all the Master Hatters in the Kingdom will follow [this] laudable Example, and use their utmost Endeavours to suppress the same among their Journeymen, and thereby restore their undoubted Right of being Masters over their own Servants, and not remain (as they have been for many Years done) in a State of absolute Subjection to their Journeymen.[177]

Nine years later a wholesale manufacturer described in frustration that if 'six Men are at Work with a Master Hat-maker, and they imagine themselves in the least ill used, they, by the Law of Journeymen, are allowed to lay a Fine of what sum they please upon any Man that shall thereafter work with the said Master, until he shall have paid a considerable Sum of Money, as a Forfeit or Fine for the imaginary ill-usage'. He also described how men laid fines upon each other. He was told by his men that

> if I kept such a one, they would all leave off Work. Upon enquiring the Reason, it was usually some one of the following: That when they

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[175] Rule, *Experience of Labour*, p. 111. *Sherborne Mercury*, 18/10/1742.
[176] Rule, *Labouring Classes*, p. 120.
[177] *London Daily Advertiser*, 19/3/1753.

> were all drunk together, he called a Man of their Fraternity a 'Rogue', borrowed a Hat which they confirmed into a Theft, drank of a *Garnish* and did not join to it, gave the *Bag* and began work again without being asked for in *Form* by a *Brother Trade*; or that he some time since (perhaps seven years ago) stood by a *foul* man, or that he somewhere worked under the Prices of the Town he now works in.

The hatters' tactic of withdrawing labour 'especially in Time of Great Demand for Goods' was already well established. 'When there is the most Reason for them to work, they will then do the least ...Everyone sees and feels the Evil ... even though combinations are entirely banned'.[178] In his letters to James Beekman, Thomas Owens in Bristol described the 'wickedness of our *jurnimen* in not doing their work as it should be'.[179] Later he complained that 'our men is become our masters and [we] cannot get hats at this time made for money'.[180]

There is only one example in South Gloucestershire of the hatters leading food riots. They combined with local colliers in 1795 to steal passing wheat and flour on the Bristol High Road at Coalpit Heath. After the military and magistrates had retired, the mob reassembled and broke into a house, stole five sacks of wheat, and distributed it. The Westerleigh justices negotiated a rate for the wheat with the farmers which, at a meeting in the churchyard, was accepted by the rioters. The men were then lectured on the 'flagitiousness of

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[178] *St James Chronicle*, 13/3/1764. A later example is in *St James Chronicle*, 1-3/5/1804. Green, *Artisans to Paupers*, p. 92.
[179] Beekman: From Thomas Owen, 21/7/1764.
[180] Beekman: From Thomas Owen, 23/2/1768.

their conduct' and the possibility of the 'Forfeiture of their Lives to the Laws of their Country' pointed out.[181] Arrests were made and more promised.[182]

Riot and *taxation populaire* rather than trade union activity were the norm during the grain shortages at the end of the eighteenth century.[183] Randall found that the 'moral economy of the crowd' discerned by Thompson was 'forged and strengthened' by such events. He emphasised the necessity of viewing regular food riots as 'products of workers' communities, not as independent of them'. This was a 'more fragmentary union tradition which surfaced throughout the century in a variety of trades ... not always overt and, even if more difficult for outworkers, the problems were not insurmountable ... It was easier to maintain a formal and overt union pressure in workshop trades where skills were at a premium'. The Gloucestershire woollen manufacturing districts also experienced major food riots the same year (and also in 1766 and 1800-1), but both the strike and the food riots were categorised by 'orderliness, discipline and purpose'.[184]

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[181] Local magistrates could read the Riot Act, the effect of which was to render all who failed to disperse within an hour guilty of a felony (Bentley, *English Criminal Justice*), p. 4.
[182] *FFBJ*, 14/11/1795.
[183] Cole, *General Union*, p. 78. *Taxation populaire:* forcible seizing and distribution of foodstuffs.
[184] Randall, 'Conference Report', p. 13. 'Grievances operated within a popular consensus as to what were legitimate and what were illegitimate practices in marketing, milling, baking, etc,' E P Thompson, 'The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century', *Past and Present*, No. 50, February 1971, pp. 78-79. Also, Adrian Randall and Andrew Charlesworth, *An Atlas of Industrial Protest in Britain 1750-1990* (Basingstoke, Macmillan 1996), 'Section A Industrial protest: 1750-1850', pp. 1-11.

Dobson lists 333 walk-outs across all trades in England between 1717 and 1800.[185] Rule called these 'a clear indication of the frequency of industrial disputes even if their actual number is beyond computation' and thought there was a 'persistence of conspiracy as a weapon against trade unionism' even though many cases of conspiracy were lost.[186]

Evidence of confrontation between South Gloucestershire hatters and their masters concentrates in the first half of the nineteenth century. The arrival around 1800 of the London manufacturers with their foremen and factories forced a change to the traditional way of work. The manufacturers unwillingly brought with them the attentions of the hatters' unions of London and Stockport and a string of strikes from 1790-1835. The writ of the Combination Acts of 1799-1800 seemingly did not run locally. James Burn described the hat-manufacturing districts, including Manchester and its neighbourhood, and *Winterburn* and *Oldlands Common*, as 'for many years thriving seats of hat-making industry, but one or the other was scarcely ever free from the disagreeable excitement of strikes. One invariable tendency of these strikes in any of these districts was to make the condition of the trade worse for the men, whether they won or lost the contest'.[187]

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[185] Dobson, *Masters and Journeymen*, pp. 60-73, 127-129; Appendix A, pp. 154-170.
[186] Rule, *Labouring Classes*, pp. 256, 259-260.
[187] Burn, *Glimpse*, pp. 39-64.

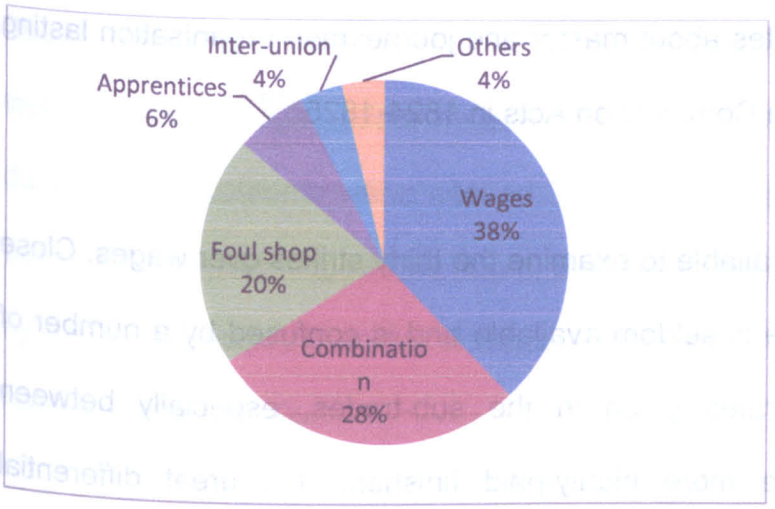

Figure 91: Reasons for seventy-nine hatters' strikes, 1667-1907.

A new list provided here of seventy-nine solely hatters' strikes between 1667-1907, all except two in England, is still undoubtedly incomplete.[188] However, it does indicate the three great causes of disharmony: wages, either increases applied for or decreases imposed, 38%; combination, where some aspect of 'conspiracy' against the masters was determined, 28%; and a foul shop, where masters sought to introduce employees not properly apprenticed by the men, 20%. A further 6% of strikes were caused by disputes over some aspect of apprentice regulations. Within the categories of combination, *foul* shop, and apprentices, the basic cause was the determination of the men to control entry to the trade, thereby restricting the masters' ability to flood the market with cheap labour in good times and to retrench the dearest men in bad. Where Dobson found twenty-nine cases of combination and conspiracy in all trades between 1710-1800, this new list finds twenty-two among the hatters from

[188] 'During the period between 1828 and 1842, strikes had frequently taken place in various parts of the United Kingdom, all of which were more or less adverse to the interests of the men' (*HG*, 1/11/1886). Appendix 60: *Hatters' strikes, 1697-1907.*

1710-1838, these disputes about master and journeymen organisation lasting beyond the repeal of the Combination Acts in 1824-1825.[189]

Little solid material is available to examine the thirty strikes over wages. Close detail of hatters' income is seldom available and is confused by a number of factors: the different rates given in the sub-trades, especially between manufacturers and the more highly-paid finishers; the great differential between London and country rates, where the latter could be up to 50% less; and that almost all hatters were piece workers, often setting their own hours, pace of work, and number of days attended.

Figure 92: Weekly wages in shillings in London and the provinces, 1697-1930.[190]

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[189] *Repeal of the Laws Relating to the Combination of Workmen*, 5 George IV, c. 95 (1824); 6 George IV, c. 129 (1825). Orth, *Combination*, Appendices II-IV, pp. 162-171.

[190] Sources: *CA*; Giles, 'Felt-Hatting'; *HG*; Lloyd, *Treatise on Hats*; Mayhew, 'Labour and the Poor'; Thomas Molineux, *The Trial of [seven men], Journeymen Hatters of Macclesfield for a Conspiracy*, shorthand record (Goldsmiths Library, University of London, 19295, B/806/3, 1806); Rule, *Experience of Labour*; Rule, *Labouring Classes*; Smith, *Felt Trades*; Smith, *Hatters*; 'Trades' Societies and Strikes', *Trades' Societies*; Weinstein, *Feltmakers*; Arthur Young, *A Six Months Tour through the North of England*, Vol. 3 (1771, reprint New York, Augustus Kelley 1967).

Sporadic weekly wage records show three significant nineteenth-century factors. First, the tight labour market and high inflationary pressures of 1810 during the Napoleonic wars; second, the rise in wages, general across the country in the post-Napoleonic boom; and, third, the slump in industry wages by about 50% with the arrival of the silk hat and the near collapse of the felt hat trade in the 1840s.[191]

In 1824, a select committee on artizans and machinery investigated whether combinations of workmen across all trades sought to raise wages. In the hat industry in London the committee concentrated on wage strikes in 1794, 1802, 1810, 1817 (after the failing corn crop of 1816), and again in 1820.[192] The last strike in 1820, at least, directly involved the Gloucestershire hatters. Four men from the trade were interviewed, George Ravenhill and John Bowler from the masters and John Lang and John Watson for the men. Their evidence spreads over forty-six pages.[193] The manufacturers' chairman George Ravenhill, a partner in Borradaile's who spoke for about fifty London firms, can be sensed squirming in his chair as the committee led by Joseph Hume set about him. Ravenhill gave information grudgingly and suffered several helpful lapses of memory concerning events only four years old. He was forced to

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[191] Green, *Conflict*, pp. 213-214. Hatter John Watkins said in 1824 that he earned £3 a week, but twenty years before could have earned £3 10s 'with more ease' (*Select Committee*, 1824), p. 150. Handbill of the hat ruffers, Stockport, 1844 (CA).

[192] 1796, for a wage increase, successful; 1802, against foul men, unsuccessful; 1810 for a wage increase, successful; 1817, for a wage increase, compromised, but most masters gave the increase anyway ('Trades' Societies and Strikes', *Trades' Societies*), p. 354.

[193] *Select Committee* (1824): second report, sixth day 1/3/24, George Ravenhill, chairman of the London hat manufacturers, pp. 73-86, and John Bowler, hat manufacturer, pp. 86-90; third report, seventh day 2/3/24, John Lang, secretary to the Fair Trade club, pp. 91-100, and John Watkins, ex-hatter, pp. 148-154. Comments on the hatting trade were also made by Francis Place on the fifth day 26/2/24, pp. 64-65.

agree that if it was 'illegal for the men to unite to demand a greater portion of wages than they were receiving ... it must be illegal for the masters to unite to lower the wages'.[194] Yet, twenty-five London hatters were recently convicted of wage conspiracy, while the masters met regularly in London to fix reductions.[195] Ravenhill could not remember sending on resolutions resulting from meetings to masters in the country. During the 1820 strike, instructions were sent by London masters to contracting masters in '*Winterbourn* and other places' to close the manufactories. A paper of 1820 from the Journeymen Hatters of *Winterbourn* and Frampton Cotterell, and shown to the select committee, spoke out against their London masters.[196] Ravenhill could not remember the document.

Francis Place carefully coached the working class witnesses who appeared.[197] The wage dispute in 1820, said John Watkins, a journeyman for twenty-six years, stemmed from the men being asked to produce larger crowned hats, and requesting a shilling a dozen more than the standard rate, but being offered a shilling less. The masters threatened to take three apprentices if the price reduction was not agreed. Manufacturer John Bowler, 'fifteen years a master', agreed to the 'wage advance', but told the committee that 'according to the laws of the land I could [take more apprentices], according to the regulations of the trade I could not'.[198] One of the leading

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[194] *Select Committee* (1824), p. 75.
[195] *Select Committee* (1824), p. 87.
[196] *Select Committee* (1824), p. 76, paper 18/7/1820 (which has not been found).
[197] Hill, *British Economic and Social History*, p. 153.
[198] *Select Committee* (1824), p. 87.

firms in the 'negotiation' was Christy's with their Frampton Cotterell factory. During the strike, men out of work were each paid £1 a week, reduced to 15s after six weeks, from support around the country.[199] Employers found that despite advertising for workers in London and the provinces, 'so general was the strike, and so determined the workmen, that not one would return to their employ unless the masters would bind themselves to raise their wages and not keep more than two apprentices at a time'.[200] The London union secretary kept all the towns and villages informed by correspondence and received back information on the prices paid in each place and whether adjustments were made by negotiation or strike. This correspondence was used against the men on trial for conspiracy when letters 'from the country' were stopped by the masters and 'taken from the postman and paid for at the door of the turn-house and opened by the masters'.[201] The dispute ended in embarrassing failure for the men, as a contemporary factory commissioner described, they 'stayed out for fifteen weeks, then accepted employment at a *decrease* of 1s, instead of a rise of the sum, which they had forfeited nearly a third of a year's wages to gain'.[202]

In 1829, twenty-eight Oldland Common hatters 'struck for wages'.[203] Those who refused to join the strike were beaten and several received serious injuries. Three were thrown into a pond and 'nearly suffocated'. William

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[199] *Select Committee* (1824), p. 149.
[200] *Select Committee* (1824), p. 74; BL, Place Collection, Additional Manuscripts 27799, fn. 80-83. Green, *Artisans to Paupers*, p. 130.
[201] *Select Committee* (1824), pp. 94-95.
[202] Tufnell, *Character*, p. 77.
[203] BCL, *Ellacombe Papers*, Vol. 9, p. 126.

Frankham who 'had the direction' of the Oldland hat manufactory was 'beaten in the most brutal manner as his bruises showed' and was 'obliged to seek safety in flight'.[204] He brought the news to the firm's owner, William Moore of Bicknell & Moore, in London, who then employed *foul* men from outside the 'Fair Trade' to take the strikers' place. When the *knobsticks* appeared in Gloucestershire they were 'dreadfully beaten by the discontented men'. Moore went to the London police who advised that he had 'no other remedy than that of abandoning the premises, or removing his manufactory to another part of the kingdom'. However, Sir Richard Birnie, chief magistrate at Bow Street, 'deprecated such an opinion', and asked 'where the place was in which such lawless conduct could be carried on with impunity'.[205]

The hatters' leader, George Ollis, asked the vicar of Bitton, the Rev H Ellacombe, to mediate.[206] However, Moore stood firm and Ollis later believed that the decision to withdraw work was 'predetermined'. The hatters regretted Moore's decision to have his 'work done by *foul* men', but Ollis said that the hatters 'rejoice to know by [Moore's] answer to [Ellacombe's] letter that [Moore] will withdraw his work from us and not attempt to establish the *foul* system among us, a circumstance more to be dreaded that any other thing which could befall the men of Gloucestershire'.

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[204] *Bitton Poor Rate* 1828 (BRO, P/B/OP/1/c).
[205] *The Examiner*, 13/9/1829; *BM*, 22/9/1829.
[206] BCL, *Ellacombe Papers*, 11/12/1833. Ollis wrote under the emblem of the *Felt Makers' Society of The United Kingdom*. In this version a view of St Paul's Cathedral can be seen through the window clearly demonstrating the local hatters' strong links with the London Fair Trade headquarters.

An exasperated Moore, who had been considering expansion, closed his works and they stood empty and unsold for many years. He complained that the men 'have most villainously treated me and mine and have shown such an incurably bad disposition by repeated acts of violence to me that I have made up my mind never again to have anything to do with them'. The rejection was more important than the men knew. That year, the Commissioners of Police in London gave Moore the contract to supply the whole of the force with his new invention of hard helmets.[207] Later, a Christy partner recalled that the men 'near killed Bicknell's *foul* men there - ignorant wretches. They would, I believe, nearly starve before they yielded'.[208] The men almost did starve. The bad-tempered Oldland dispute rebounded most on the hatters: for many it was the end of their hatting lives and, for the village, the shock of the lost jobs brought poverty. Requests for disbursements from the poor reached twenty a day; there were almost 2,500 hand outs in twelve months at a cost to the parish of over £1,000.[209] The year after the strike, a special volunteer

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[207] *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 24/11/1833. Moore took his Oldland Common work to Joseph Willday, 'eminent' local hat manufacturer and banker, at Atherstone, Warwickshire, but did not escape the unions. In March 1834, several important military orders were placed at risk by a hard fought strike in when hatters were outraged by the employment of *foul* labour. The men claimed that they were 'used more like Hottentots that are void of sense and feeling, than rational and feeling men that have been brought up in a land as we call a land of liberty and *christian* land'. Willday wrote to Moore that 'if government do not interfere and put a stop to these things there will be a revolution ere long. I never was so uncomfortable as at this time in my life. Spies have been placed upon my house by night and day and no one can go in or out without being found out' (Aspinall, *Trade Unions*: Letter from Moore to Lord Melbourne; also, in folios 15-19, a written response by the workers to Willday's position, printed as a handbill by Willday and posted in Atherstone, 3/3/1834; letter from Willday to Moore 3/3/1834; letter, undated, from Melbourne's secretary to Moore; No. 212, p. 233. Willday quickly left Atherstone. He spent over £3,000 in buying land, erecting buildings and transferring his business to Rugeley in Staffordshire; the 'violent, overbearing conduct of the Hatters' Trade Union cost Atherstone weekly wages of up to £400'. *Birmingham Advertiser*, reprint *BM*, 14/6/1834.

[208] CA, 17/10/1834.

[209] £1,081/0/5½ was handed out in twelve months from March 1832, not including medical payments to assistant overseer Tyler of £37/11/1½, £56/0/7½ and £66/19/4½. There was a

constabulary was deemed 'highly expedient' with forty immediate volunteers as there was a 'strong reason to fear that Incendiaries from other districts will make great efforts to produce a spirit of disorder here as in other places'.

Seizing felting bows was a common technique to prevent workmen finishing orders at home.[210] Five men were committed for assembling with over one hundred others to intimidate workmen in Stockport in 1830.[211] This mob, 'the old bitch and her whelps', broke pans, kettles and planks, burned hats and stole bread at Werneth, Offerton and Denton. In March another mob attacked a hatter in Levenshulme, firing a shot at him, and injured a hatter's wife at Gorton by stone throwing.[212]

Men employed in Frampton Cotterell by London firms were the focus of an inter-union strike in 1831. The cause went back to the foundation of *The London Association of Journeymen Hatters* in 1798, the forerunners of the 'London Lilies' (after their white *blanks*) or the 'Fair Trade'. Initially, the Association was more a friendly society with national accords than a modern union: members were 'recognised craftsmen [and] practical hatters' assisted during the frequent periods of tramping by *asking cards*.[213] *The Associated Feltmakers of Winterbourne* was part of this group in 1810.[214]

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significant increase in Bitton poor law cases at this time followed by a local increase in pauper hatters (BRO, P.B/X/11, *Manuscripts of the Overseers of the Poor*, Bitton, c. 1810-1833; 1841 Census).

[210] No source has been found showing the seizure of bows in South Gloucestershire.

[211] *Stockport Advertiser*, 19/2/1830.

[212] *Stockport Advertiser*, 5/3/1830.

[213] Housley, *Development*, p. 116.

[214] BRO, 43454/1, PicBox/7A/Trade/1, Charles Brown blank, 23/2/1810.

The London association degenerated so far that, by 1815, it was necessary to make a fresh start across the country. With the 'Fair Trade' pre-eminent in London, at least two new and separate organisations were formed that year from the debris: the Winterbourne-based 'Waterloo Club' for South Gloucestershire and a northern union, the 'Blue Blanks'.[215] There was an essential difference between the 'Blue Blanks' and the 'London Lilies' apart from their geography. The 'Blue Blanks' were more amenable to the Act of 1777 which allowed the masters more apprentices in their manufactories; the 'London Lilies' stuck rigidly to the Elizabethan limit of two. Amidst a great rancour, each vied for an increase in membership. The South Gloucestershire men's ways of working made them more natural bedfellows 'for general purposes' with the 'Blue Blanks', especially the Christy bodymakers who performed similar operations to those at that firm's other new factory in Stockport.[216] There were branches of one group or the other in almost every town in England, Ireland and Scotland. By 1830-1831, the 'Blue Blanks' claimed 1,178 members with its greatest strength in Stockport, while the 'Fair Trade' had eighteen distinct branches and a London headquarters spending £2,305 19s 8d in one year of which £955 went to assist the branches.[217] Between them, the two unions represented about ninety percent of all hatters.[218]

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[215] The 'Blue Blanks' were instituted 29/1/1815 (Turner, *First Shop*) p. 25.

[216] McKnight, *Stockport Hatting*, p. 60. Christy's bought their Canal Street works 1/1825 (Smith, *Felt Trades*, p. 176). Also Barber, *Chronicles*, p. 31. Turner, *First Shop*, p. 136.

[217] Smith, *Hatters*, pp. 3-4; Giles, 'Felt-Hatting', p. 127; Second Yearly Account of the Receipts and Expenditure of the Hatters' Union for the Relief of Strangers, etc, 1/10/1830-30/9/1831 (Tameside Local Studies and Archives Centre).

[218] *Select Committee* (1824): John Lang, pp. 91-92; John Watkins, p. 153.

In 1831, over 200 hat-makers and finishers in London requested the Gloucestershire men to break up their own fund and pay instead into the London fund at 2s a week. This move may have been provoked by Christy's attempt to reduce piece rates to Frampton Cotterell levels, first in Stockport in 1830, and later in London.[219] If Frampton Cotterell was 'captured', pressure could be applied to raise the Gloucestershire rates. Upset by a refusal after 'fresh overtures', the 'Fair Trade' said that unless the masters compelled the Gloucestershire men to join them on the Old System (two apprentices) or discharged them, the finishers would strike. The masters of some twenty London firms with Gloucestershire interests met to discuss tactics at the *Museum Tavern* in Blackfriars Road and refused to 'set adrift 300 industrious and valuable men' as the 'demand was so arbitrary and unjust'.[220]

All the London finishers turned out at the height of the pre-season. Christy's had spring fashions, 'a very heavy fine stock of goods', needing urgent finishing and the firm spent several anxious days bringing outside workers to London. Fourteen men came from Frampton Cotterell and enthusiastic 'Blue Blank' men from Christy's Stockport and Oldham manufactories, backed by their union, responded to posters and went south to 'supply their places'.[221] One Christy partner reflected that the firm had 'not provoked this turnout and

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[219] Smith, *Felt Trades*, p. 240.
[220] Appendix 62: *Resolution of the Master Hat Manufacturers, 1831.*
[221] *Stockport Advertiser*, 15/4/1831. CA, 31/3/1831.

are resisting an unwarrantable attack on our liberties – these turnouts are *desparate*'. Christy's applied to the police for an increased force.[222]

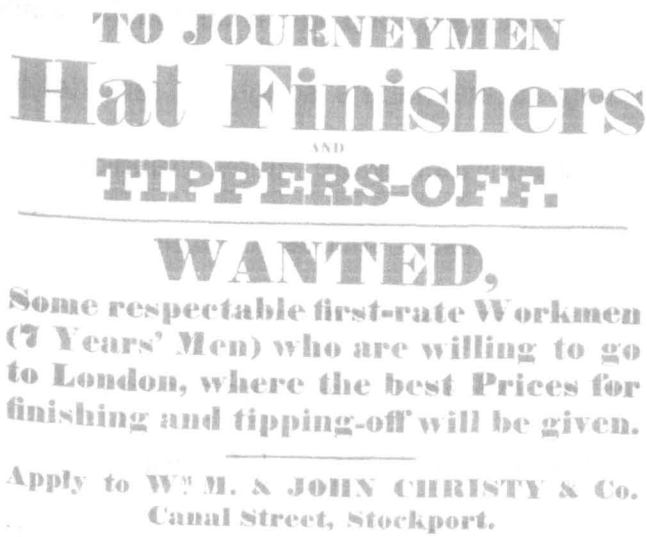
TO JOURNEYMEN
Hat Finishers
AND
TIPPERS-OFF.
WANTED,
Some respectable first-rate Workmen (7 Years' Men) who are willing to go to London, where the best Prices for finishing and tipping-off will be given.
Apply to Wm. & JOHN CHRISTY & Co.
Canal Street, Stockport.

Figure 93: Stockport poster for strike breakers, 24/3/1831.

The strike was lost as all the manufacturers were quickly staffed. Within a month, men from two firms, Vaughan and James, and Powell, both with connections in Watley's End, returned to work 'to save the shops'.[223] Many Christy's men moved to other 'Fair Trade' shops in London. A few days later the remnants trooped back. James Peachey, secretary to the Felt Makers' Company in London, told a municipal enquiry that the union was 'oppressive', with considerable funds, and 'extremely severe' regulations ... 'Only three men in London had withstood the power of the union'.[224]

[222] CA, 4/4/1831. Smith, *Felt Trades*, p. 241.
[223] CA, 13/4/1831.
[224] *The Times*, 25/10/1834.

In March 1833, a journeymen's congress at Manchester attempted to weld all the separate hatting associations into one union.[225] James Burn attended as delegate for Glasgow, became vice chairman, and left a limited first-hand account. It was an involved meeting as the hatters sought to remodel the constitutions of their associations. Burn felt there were 'many tyrannical rules in the trade'.[226] Superficially, the congress was a success and the old hatting emblem used for the tramping blanks was reworked under the auspices of *The Hatters' Union of Great Britain and Ireland.* The emblem showed a hatter in working dress linking hands with two men dressed for tramping – a 'symbolic reference to the amalgamation'.[227] Flushed with the new union, the hatters even passed a resolution to examine combining the *fair* and *foul* men. An observer, almost certainly Burn, said later that *foul* men worked for a lower rate of prices putting *fair* men out of immediate work which in turn reduced hat prices and diminished longer-term security.[228]

As a part of this 'union', the Gloucestershire feltmakers rejoined the 'Fair Trade' in what was likely a geographic rearrangement. After the struggle of 1831 to reject the 'Fair Trade', Christy's were bemused. One partner wrote

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[225] CA, Memo of rules, 3/1833; *HG*, 1/10/1888; Smith, *Felt Trades*, p. 242. For contemporary background, Friedrich Engels, 'Socialism: Utopian and Scientific' (Chapter 1, *Revue Socialiste* 1880, reprint with Karl Marx, and Engels, in *The Communist Manifesto* (Paris 1848, reprint Ware, Wordsworth Editions 2008)). For more recent interpretations, as well as other quoted works, Barbara Taylor, *Eve and the New Jerusalem, Socialism and Feminism in the Nineteenth Century* (London Virago 1983) and Gregory Claeys, *Citizens and saints, Politics and anti-politics in early British socialism* (CUP 1989).

[226] *The Autobiography of a Beggar Boy*, edited David Vincent (1855, London, Europa 1978), p. 144. Burn played a leading role in the establishment of the Oddfellows in south-west Scotland. He was elected to the Board of Directors at the annual conference in Bristol in 1846 (*Beggar Boy*), pp. 20-21.

[227] The union was constituted in Manchester 22/4/1833 (CA, P/2/12). Turner, *First Shop*, p. 143.

[228] *HG*, 'Retrospect', 2/5/1887.

that there were 'strange doings with the men. All the laws which the trade is (sic) to be governed by are to emanate from London. Now the two parties are identified, they are mixing up together'.[229] Luke Fowler, Christy's manager at Frampton Cotterell, thought the result meant that 'all the men in Gloucestershire is (sic) in precisely the same situation as they were in twelve or fourteen years ago to be dictated to by the London men'.[230]

These attempts at amalgamation are not surprising in retrospect. The hatters held regular congresses from the latter part of the eighteenth century. By 1808, their general congress in Stockport brought together journeymen hat-makers and finishers and placed the men in the forefront of union organisation.[231] Ten years later, the *Associated Journeymen Hatters* in Newcastle-under-Lyme subscribed towards the support of cotton spinners in Manchester who demanded wages equalisation across their small shops. This action of the hatters was one of the stimuli from which flowed *The Philanthropic Society*, a brief union of all the trades in Manchester in 1818.[232]

The northern hatters were enthusiastic supporters of John Doherty and *The National Association for the Protection of Labour* (NAPL). The association was highly effective in spreading its founding resolution that each trade should be

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[229] CA, 18, 31/5/1833. Giles, 'Felt-Hatting', p. 128.
[230] CA, P/2/5.
[231] 19/9/1808 at the Royal Oak, in Hillgate (Aspinall, *Trade Unions*, No. 103), p. 105.
[232] William Shepherd Kinnersley, MP, to Viscount Sidmouth, 12/8/1818 (TNA, HO 42/179). Also HO 41/4/149-150. Aspinall, *Trade Unions*, No. 252, p. 269, No. 260, p. 272 (resolutions 29/8/1818). Kirby & Musson, *Voice of the People*, p. 25. Cole, *General Union*, pp. 5-9.

'regularly organised and united to itself'.[233] The NAPL's journal reported that the hatters were successfully reorganising their national body and had sent two delegates to the South in 1830 'to induce the hatters of that quarter to join'.[234] 'The South' was the 'Fair Trade' and their refusal to join the NAPL provided Gloucestershire's 'Waterloo Club' with a further reason for rebutting London's approach made the next year. The NAPL was 'never national' and its membership concentrated among textile workers, including hatters.[235] It was intended mainly to prevent wage reductions and was in tune with the hatters' principal concerns. In the clothing sector, it was 'not the weaker shoemakers or tailors, but the more advantaged hatters who participated most strongly in the NAPL having experienced precisely the process of reductions spreading from area to area, which the NAPL was designed to prevent'.[236]

A similar story followed with the *Grand National Consolidated Trades' Union of Great Britain and Ireland* (GNCTU) which attempted to 'unify organisation within particular trades and within trades'. The later months of 1833 and the early months of 1834 'witnessed a significant upsurge of discussion about

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[233] Chase, *Early Trade Unionism*, p.144.
[234] *United Trades' Co-operative Journal*, 2/10/1830. Kirby & Musson, *Voice of the People*, p. 174.
[235] Kirby & Musson, *Voice of the People*, p. 259.
[236] Robert Sykes, 'Trade Unionism and Class Consciousness: the 'Revolutionary' Period of General Unionism, 1829-1834' in Rule, *Formative Years*, Chapter 8, p. 183. The hatters subscribed £61, the highest total of any single, non-textile trade in 1830. In the six months from July 1830 they gave £45 8s 8d, 2¼% of the total from all trades. In 1831, among the northern groups, ten hatter groups from Ashton, Bury, Denton, Droylsden, Gorton, Hollinwood, Hooley Hill, and Oldham together paid £30 1s 3d (31/7/-10/9/1831; compiled from pamphlet *On Combination of Trades*, London, Ridgway 1831, and *Voice of the People*. Kirby & Musson, *Voice of the People*, pp. 171, 199. Cole, *General Union*, pp. 32, 182.

'national union'.[237] The GNCTU's origins were with Derby silk weavers, supported by local hatters, but London artisans and craftsmen with few organisational or personal connections with previous general unions in the midlands and the north provided the impetus.[238] Its significance lay in the utopian propaganda of Robert Owen following his work at New Lanark and New Harmony rather than in union organisation.[239] The GNCTU was characterised by small-scale industry, carried on in workshops of relatively highly skilled and relatively insecure craftsmen, like the hatters. W H Oliver called the union's appeal 'socialism aptly designed for workers not yet industrialised but alarmed at the pace and consequences of contemporary industrialisation'.[240]

The union existed only from February to July. One crisis quickly followed upon another.[241] The union's recruitment tours set up lodges in unnamed provinces. A 'host of London crafts' joined the union in the first half of 1834; silk hatters appear on the balance sheet.[242] David Green saw in all these movements the results of dwindling contracts after the Napoleonic Wars when skilled

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[237] W H Oliver, 'The Consolidated Trades' Union of 1834', *The Economic History Review*, New Series, Vol. 17, No. 1, 1964, p. 78.

[238] Contributions to the Derby silk-weavers strike, listed in the Pioneer, the organ of the GNCTU in the first six months of 1834, include the Newcastle hatters (Robert Fyson, 'Unionism, Class and Community in the 1830s: Aspects of the National Union of the Operative Potters' in Rule, *Formative Years*), Chapter 9, p. 207.

[239] Engels, *Utopian and Scientific*; Robert Owen, *A New View of Society and Other Writings* (London, Cavell and Davies 1813, reprint London, Dent 1927).

[240] Oliver, 'Consolidated Trades' Union', p. 77.

[241] The Derby dispute was three months old when the union was set up; the campaign against the sentencing of the Dorchester labourers (the Tolpuddle martyrs) beginning in March; the contest between Robert Owen and his Executive on the one hand and the more vehement journalists, J E Smith, editor of the *Crisis*, and James Morrison, editor of the *Pioneer*, on the other; and the strike of the London tailors began late in April (Oliver, 'Consolidated Trades' Union'), p. 83.

[242] TNA, HO 64/15, 26/4/1834. Oliver, 'The Consolidated Trades' Union', pp. 83-85.

craftsmen were forced to 'mount rearguard actions to defend wages and protect themselves against encroachment by cheap, unskilled labour'.[243]

This working class radicalism was in evidence among the hatters in Bristol and South Gloucestershire even if many provable associations with the NAPL and GNCTU were not. In 1831, the hatters were prominent in the procession for the chairing of the reform candidates in the general election.[244] When Bristol's workers marched the following year under the auspices of the general union to celebrate the passing of the Reform Bill, the entire hatting community of 1,000 men turned out.[245] Over 600 members of the *United Hatters of Winterbourne and Frampton* carried two banners, one crimson silk with the motto 'We have conquered without the sword', and the other with a hat in the centre and motto 'Britannia sets Europe the example of Reform'. They were followed by 300 hatters of Oldland Common with a purple silk banner with the motto 'The voice of the nation prevails'. Other smaller flags, included, 'United we stand; Divided we fall' and 'We intend to persevere', all emblems of the 'Fair Trade'.[246]

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[243] Green, *Artisans to Paupers*, pp. 131-132. In 1833 the National Equitable Labour Exchange Association of the Industrious Classes (NELEAIE) was formed and quickly had 500 craftsmen members, including the hatters, who could 'produce their various articles without requiring very large means' (*Crisis*, 21/9/1833). This association was 'in no sense a ... federation of trade unions; it enlisted individuals and societies as they offered themselves'. 'The sole qualification for membership was a readiness to bring goods to the exchange. Problems with exchanging goods for foodstuffs were never finally overcome. Members could easily exchange hats for shoes, but if they exchanged hats or shoes for bread and meat it was only after an ignominious surrender to disproved theories of currency and exchange' (W H Oliver, 'The Labour Exchange Phase of the Co-operative Movement', *Oxford Economic Papers*, Vol. X, No. 3, October 1958), pp. 355-358.

[244] Mark Harrison, *Crowds and History, Mass Phenomena in English Towns, 1790-1835* (CUP 1988), p. 204.

[245] Harrison, *Crowds and History*, p. 151.

[246] *BM*, 23/6/1832.

The *Charter*, with its six-point programme of reform, was published in May 1838, and the following month Henry Vincent, 'soon to become the lion of west country Chartism', came to Bristol Guildhall to organise adoption meetings. Meetings were also held weekly on Brandon Hill; the *Charter* journal claimed a crowd of 10,000 for one in January, at which Vincent rode in procession on a white horse.[247] In September, Chartism was discussed by the *Working Men's Association* of Oldland Common, with an audience of almost 1,000. Jacob Short, local hat master, led pledges to 'support the General Convention of the industrious classes ... in their laudable endeavours to secure to the people their inalienable rights of a fair representation in the Commons' House of Parliament'. Other hatters attended.[248] In 1842, nominations to the *General Council of the National Charter Association to the People* for Kingswood Hill included Charles Cowell and William Stanley, hatters, of Oldland Common.[249]

Frampton Cotterell hatters were closely involved in 1841 in the election of members of the Western District of Gloucestershire at Dursley. The Liberal procession included the United Hatters from Frampton 'preceded by a fine band of music and a large number of banners bearing appropriate devices and inscriptions'.[250] For many subsequent years, the *Bristol Society of Hatters* made subscriptions to workers in conflict, for instance distressed printers in

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[248] John Cannon, *The Chartists in Bristol*, No. 10, BBTHA, 1964, pp. 2-4.
[249] Meeting 4/9/1838 (*Northern Star*, 14/9/1838).
[250] *The Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser*, 12/3/1842.
BM, 01/7/1841.

1842.[251] In 1843, some 400 hatters from Winterbourne signed a petition against the corn-laws.[252]

The five-month hatters' strike of 1834-1835, orchestrated by Christy and Co, is remarkable for the lack of attention it has received from historians. This dispute is the earliest in trade union history where detailed records are available – so many that they are still not fully catalogued.[253] The Quaker Christys, partners and close kin, wrote almost daily during the strike, confidentially and with 'sometimes acrimonious candour, and are illuminatingly frank about their motives'.[254]

Christy's believed in the absolute right of capital to arrange its own affairs. The firm was determined to break free from the constant and damaging effects of union action.[255] It set out single-mindedly to break the influence of the GNCTU, to oust the 'Fair Trade' from all of its London premises and, as a result, to create a de-unionised, pre-eminent business. The unions were deceived by a well planned operation; increasingly hostile fellow manufacturers were opportunistically ensnared. Competitors, envious of Christy's success, would be 'well pleased to see us tripping'.[256] Despite wavering hearts in the Christy ranks, the main objectives were met.

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[251] *BM*, 15/1/1842.
[252] *BM*, 5/3/1842.
[253] Extensive enquiry at the TUC Library, London Metropolitan University, 2009-2010.
[254] Turner, *First Shop*, p. 4. The one great drawback of the Christy letters, apart from the writing and shorthand, is that they cover only one side of the correspondence, that from London to Stockport.
[255] CA, Plan of the Turn Out, 8/5/1834. CA, 29/10/1834.
[256] CA, 20/6/1834.

Early in 1834, the hatters held a preliminary strike, plotted at a national congress in Liverpool. They carefully chose the issue of *standing money*, paid in Stockport, but not in the south. Men who were *shopped* paid 1s a week to equalise their position with those working from home. Congress decided on a 'domino' strategy and one firm was chosen by lot to face the demand for abolition of the charge.[257] Christy's local management threw themselves into the fight and agreed with twenty-three firms in Manchester to lock out the strike supporters in forty-nine Lancashire houses.[258] The hatters' response was to send Stockport men on the *tramp* and to threaten to paralyse every firm involved by extending the strike to London and Gloucestershire.[259] To family dismay, Christy's senior partners, based in London, agreed with the men that the *standing charge* was 'odious and indefensible'. One Christy partner saw that the men were 'preparing a rod for our own backs and richly we deserve it'.[260] The London partners also knew that this was a fight that would not be won as soundings among London masters showed little interest due to the spring rush.[261] However, Thomas Christy junior, the principal antagonist, thought a fight on the issue would be worthwhile because 'Gloucestershire is beggared if men leave us. They have nowhere to go and there are so many men on the lists that the Union are as poor as rats. I should

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258 *Stockport Advertiser*, 2/1834. For trade union tactics see Rule, *Bulletin* 1984, p. 11.
259 CA, Minutes of a meeting of the Master Hat Manufacturers of Stockport, 13, 17/2/1834.
260 CA, Anonymous to Christys, 19/2/1834. Smith, *Felt Trades*, p. 245.
261 Turner, *First Shop*, p. 151.
CA, 14/2/1834.

like well to throw 200 or 300 on them for three weeks or a month even if we give way at last'.[262]

In disunity typical of the masters, a Stockport firm gave in and strike resistance quickly collapsed.[263] For the first time the influence of the GNCTU was evident as 'Blue Blanks', 'Fair Trade', and the Gloucestershire makers acted in unison. The London journeymen were jubilant and wrote to Gloucestershire that more was achieved this time than for seven years before; they could get anything if they 'but asked for little enough at each demand'. Membership of the union grew quickly and even silk hatters applied.[264]

The hatters next captured new shops in London and Newcastle and struck against Bowler's to force their Stockport men into the union.[265] They also considered a strike against a new machine that could make felt bodies, but, as Luke Fowler in Gloucestershire explained, the local men had no money in their strike funds. They were drained by providing financial support to the men at Willday's in Atherstone. The young tigers at Christy's, bruised by their failure to keep *standing money*, realised they could no longer rely on the other masters. If they wished to break the GNCTU they would have to stand and plan alone.[266]

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[262] CA, 13/2/1834. Turner, *First Shop*, p. 145.
[263] The lock out at Christy's lasted only one day, 24/2/1834, which was also the day of arrest of the 'Tolpuddle martyrs'. Giles, 'Felt-Hatting', pp. 128-129. Turner, *First Shop*, p. 150. Smith, *Felt Trades*, pp. 246-247.
[264] CA, 15/3/1834. Smith, *Felt Trades*, p. 248.
[265] Smith, *Felt Trades*, p. 248. The 'Newcastle' is not specified.
[266] CA, 20/6/1834.

The plan anticipated two attributes of the industry. First, hatters were more likely to turn out in the spring when demand was high.[267] Second, masters could hold out longer than striking journeymen, but that it would not always be in their interest to do so. Masters most commonly did hold out to enforce wage reductions, but they were often prepared only for a limited time to resist requests for moderate advances if they were made in expanding markets. 'Journeymen well knew this; choice of the right moment for a withdrawal of labour was crucial.'[268] Christy's decided to force a strike by *fouling* the shop in an out-of-season market which was covertly overstocked. Factory Commissioner Tufnell, briefed later by Thomas Christy, explained that the 'consequences might be encountered without injury to [Christy's] ... The men struck according to expectation ... on terms least favourable to the object of Unionists [who were] compelled to exhaust their means without effect'.[269]

Arrangements were made secretly with small country masters in Cheshire and Derbyshire to make hats on commission without disclosing the Christy name.[270] This also happened in Oldland Common, where a 'deal of people [offered] to work for us'.[271] The maximum number of men were *shopped* and put to work. This extra production, which needed careful funding with cash limited to £21,000, was calculated to produce sufficient stock to withstand a

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[267]
[268] Green, 'Conflict', p. 215.
[269] Rule, *Bulletin* 1984, pp. 10-11. Rule, *Labouring Classes*, p. 261.
[270] Tufnell, *Character*, fn., p. 103.
[271] CA, Plan of the Turn Out, 8/5/1834.
CA, 4/4/1835.

long strike.[272] For the next five months the men, 'lulled into security by the sight of the great new factory rising at Fairfield, supposed it to be the cause of the extra work, and that Fairfield had made for them a perpetual spring'.[273] In addition, cadres of reliable men were formed around the country; at Frampton Cotterell 'decent Lancashire strangers' would be brought to spy on the local men and if they were found out and caused a turnout 'there will be a large family for the Union to keep'.[274]

There was scepticism about the firm's ability to build enough stock:

> We have 66 finrs [finishers], at 30 apiece produces us 165 doz. A week of [finished] Hats 40 Doz go into Stock [per week]. And the rest are sold then we have Frampton 120 men. Rangeworthy [satellite village to Frampton Cotterell] 40 men these do and ruff 90 doz/20 J Fowler [Frampton Cotterell sub-contractor] 110 doz a week [ruffed] In town we do abt 40 to 50 doz pwk making in all say 150 doz pwk now what will our stock be in 5 weeks with a surplus of say 60 doz pwk over our sales 300 Doz a mere nothing ... Stockport a mouse piddling into the sea.[275]

The Christy mastermind was Thomas, thirty-three-years-old and in charge of the London office, the firm's leading 'young tiger' and grandson of the founder, Miller Christy.[276] Thomas looked forward to 'fire the first gun and hoist the flag

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[272] Smith, *Felt Trades*, p. 249.
[273] CA, 18/8 and 23/9/1834. Giles, 'Felt-Hatting', p. 129. Christy's Stockport premises were gradually rebuilt as business expanded, but were soon considered too small and a new works was begun at Fairfield near Droylsden, south of Manchester. As confidence waned during the depression of the 1840s the works was sold before it was complete, but it remained in the family (McKnight, *Stockport Hatting*), p. 60.
[274] CA, 23/9/1834.
[275] CA, 18/8/1834.
[276] In 1858, Thomas was forced into retirement by the other directors. His consuming interest was the firm where he was 'untiring in his efforts to improve every aspect of the trade ...

of liberty', but there were complications which left him fearful of a delay.[277] The 'Fair Trade' wanted to move against London masters employing foul men in the country, but decided to leave Christy's till last because they had so much current work. Oddly, therefore, Thomas was hoping for a strike well before winter and the men were resisting. The Union havered and backed off a contest at a Congress early in October.[278] 'It's like Babel. The Gloucestershire men want one thing, the Finishers another and the Stockport men another'.[279] In the middle of it all, the London masters under threat of a wage strike sought Christy's involvement in a meeting to regulate prices. The Union presented a new price list based on an 1818-1834 comparison of bread, beef and beer. Thomas attended as he wished to delay a wage dispute until his own plans could be put into action. Union action against Bowler's gave him his excuse and, later, provided convenient cover.[280]

In the end, Thomas was left to exhort his cousins to 'begin at Stockport and *foul* the shop ... immediately'.[281] This was done on a Monday morning in September 1834. Stockport was declared independent of any union; the men were not to support other shops in conflict. *Standing money* was reimposed and the shop was made *foul* by the acceptance of twelve new apprentices,

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Unfortunately, this drive was rooted in an avarice so powerful that it eventually led to doubts about his sanity and it was combined with a bombastic and sarcastic turn of phrase that made no friends' (Smith, *Felt Trades*), p. 172.

277 CA, 25/8/1834.

278 Turner, *First Shop*, p. 155.

279 CA, 10/1834.

280 CA, 23/9/1834.

281 CA, 7&20/9/1834.

sons of local hatters.[282] The Stockport men struck on cue. In London, Bowler's gave way over wages to the Union and the 'Fair Trade' struck against Christy's in support of Stockport.[283] Winterbourne piece workers led the Gloucestershire threats and branded Christy's Stockport actions a *caulker*, worked on for a few days, and then persuaded the factory men at Frampton Cotterell and all struck.[284] Thomas closed the factory in what James Turner calls a 'pre-emptive strike against a notoriously combative body of men'.[285] Christy's feared that if new apprentices were taken in Frampton Cotterell 'the men would tear them limb from limb'.[286] Patience lost, Thomas threatened to move 'the more sensible part of the Frampton men' to Fairfield to establish 'a Frampton in Lancashire without the abuses'.[287] Eight Gloucestershire men agreed to go to London to work.[288]

The strike hardened and Thomas declared that he had 'no fear about Frampton. Let them alone a few weeks. 200 men out of work. What a body'.[289] The Union had to fund 389 men and 179 of these, 46%, were at Frampton Cotterell. At the end of October, the Stockport union appealed to fellow unionists for help.[290]

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[282] Proposals, 6/10/1834.
[283] CA, 10/10/1834.
[284] CA, 9/10/1834.
[285] CA, 13&15/10/1834. Turner, *First Shop*, p. 159.
[286] CA, 17/10/1834.
[287] CA, 14/10/1834.
[288] CA, 27/10/1834.
[289] CA, 22/10/1834.
[290] CA, letter to Operative Spinners, 31/10/1834.

This was a war of bill and newspaper posters. Thomas was first into the fray. His brief statement of 'the shameful conduct' of the London men and the 'true cause of the strike' was 'industriously circulated through the country'.[291] Thomas blamed the strike on a demand by the London men to 'compel the Lancashire men to join the London Union, or to discharge them'. This does not sit easily with his instructions to his Stockport cousins to *foul* their shop. The London journeymen were outraged by the 'gross misinterpretation' intended to 'excite a prejudice' against them.[292] Over two pages of indignation, Thomas was repeatedly accused of 'wicked and wilful misrepresentation'. Generally, the men made a sound case in point by point rebuttal. Further support came from an unexpected open letter, signed 'A Journeyman Hatter on the Banks of the Clyde, J B'.[293] This is James Burn in an early political foray who went to the heart of the matter, accusing Christy's of a 'foul design of wishing to crush the liberties' of the hatters, and to dominate the industry.

Thomas then sent a letter to Luke Fowler in Frampton Cotterell with instructions to place it under Fowler's name in a city newspaper.[294] Thomas repeated his claims of the strike's cause and said the Frampton Cotterell and Rangeworthy journeymen 'struck at the command of the London Union'. The spectre of the 1831 strike was raised. The letter ends with confidence, 'the masters know best what is just and equitable', and with a threat, 'work is fast

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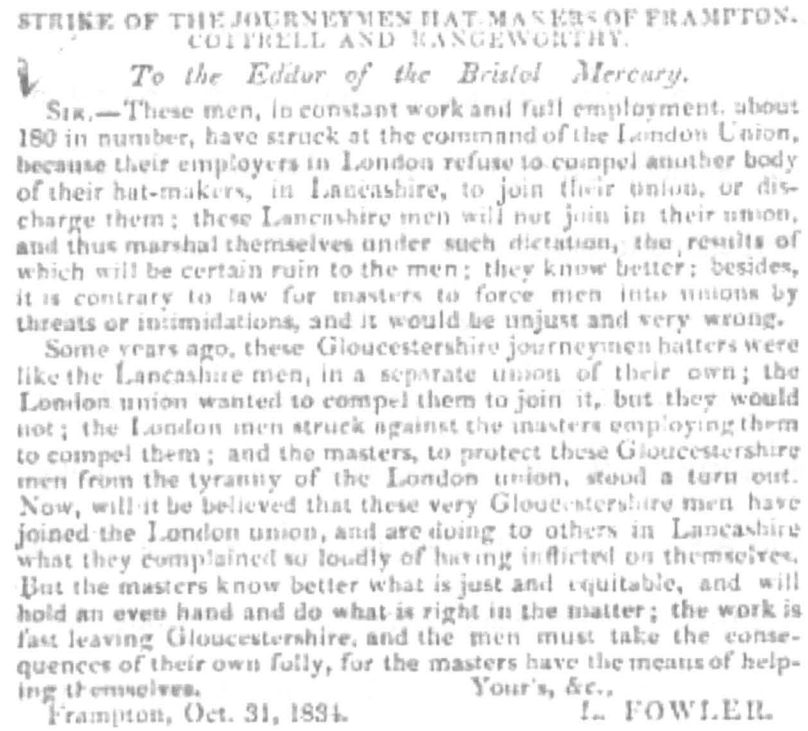
[291] Appendix 63: *Strike poster, Thomas Christy, 13/10/1834: 'A Brief Statement of the Shameful Conduct of the Journeymen Stuff Hatters of London and The True Cause of the Strike at present going on'.*
[292] Appendix 64: *Reply of the London journeymen, 1834.*
[293] CA, 'To Messrs. Christy & Co. Hat Manufacturers of London', 25/10/1834.
[294] *BM*, 1/11/1834, letter dated 31/10/1834.

leaving Gloucestershire, and the men must take the consequences of their own folly, for the masters have the means of helping themselves'.



STRIKE OF THE JOURNEYMEN HAT-MAKERS OF FRAMPTON. COTTRELL AND RANGEWORTHY.

To the Editor of the Bristol Mercury.

SIR,—These men, in constant work and full employment, about 180 in number, have struck at the command of the London Union, because their employers in London refuse to compel another body of their hat-makers, in Lancashire, to join their union, or discharge them; these Lancashire men will not join in their union, and thus marshal themselves under such dictation, the results of which will be certain ruin to the men; they know better; besides, it is contrary to law for masters to force men into unions by threats or intimidations, and it would be unjust and very wrong.

Some years ago, these Gloucestershire journeymen hatters were like the Lancashire men, in a separate union of their own; the London union wanted to compel them to join it, but they would not; the London men struck against the masters employing them to compel them; and the masters, to protect these Gloucestershire men from the tyranny of the London union, stood a turn out. Now, will it be believed that these very Gloucestershire men have joined the London union, and are doing to others in Lancashire what they complained so loudly of having inflicted on themselves. But the masters know better what is just and equitable, and will hold an even hand and do what is right in the matter; the work is fast leaving Gloucestershire, and the men must take the consequences of their own folly, for the masters have the means of helping themselves.

Your's, &c.,

Frampton, Oct. 31, 1834. L. FOWLER.

Figure 94: Thomas Christy's letter to the *Bristol Mercury*, 1834.

It was the turn of the Gloucestershire journeymen to splutter indignation as they refuted Thomas's position word for word.[295] Christy's were accused of playing off Stockport and Gloucestershire in an effort to reduce the price of body making. Thomas's father, also Thomas Christy, builder of the Frampton Cotterell factory, was praised, 'Did your father rise by oppressive measures? Did he obtain an independence by wrenching from the industrious Mechanic, his hard earned pittance?'

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[295] CA, 'Reply of the Journeymen Hatters of Frampton Cotterell & Rangeworthy, to the paragraph which appeared in the Bristol Mercury, of November the 1st 1834'. Also *BM*, 15/11/1834.

A pamphlet war broke out in which the journeymen hatters of Frampton Cotterell and Rangeworthy set out a rebuttal of Christy's claims. The men were enraged, not least because the Christys were Quakers. Repeatedly, they sought to throw the Friends' religion back at their masters. 'Is this the conduct of men espousing Christianity?' 'Will you whose names stand affixed to almost every Christian institution ... act counter to its precepts, trample under foot its mandate and in the face of a Religious Public, deprive the working man of a fair remuneration for his labour?' The men's Methodist training and learning is evident throughout, in their language and with quoted verses like *Do justly and love mercy*; *Do unto others as you would they should do unto you*. There can be no doubt that the men were shocked at Christy's stance and that, in their shock, they took the Bible for a framework for their own justification. Methodism may not have radicalised the hatters, but it certainly gave them belief, backbone and language. The passion of the pulpit concludes their pamphlet:

> Rather than submit to your unjust,
> your unchristian, your dishonourable requisitions,
> We will brave the dangers of your agitated and stormy ocean,
> Or endure the fierce changes of extreme zones,
> Yea, lie immured amidst the dense thickness of the gloomy forest,
> And perish from surrounding dangers and privations.
> Yea, wandering as exiles in the most distant regions of the earth.
> We will rather die Freemen, than live your Slaves.[296]

[296] CA, 'Reply of the Journeymen Hatters'. Also *BM*, 15/11/1834.

REPLY

OF THE

JOURNEYMEN HATTERS,

OF

FRAMPTON COTTERELL & RANGEWORTHY,

TO THE

PARAGRAPH WHICH APPEARED IN THE BRISTOL MERCURY, OF NOVEMBER THE 1*st.* 1834.

We beg leave through the Medium of the Press, to inform you and the Public, that the statement contained in the Paper above refered to, is false.

In the first place the Journeymen Hatters of Frampton Cotterell, and Rangeworthy did not strike at the command of the London Union, neither did the London Union request them so to do, nor did the Journeymen Hatters of London, strike to compel the Journeymen Hatters of Lancashire to join their Union, neither did the Journeymen Hatters of London, Frampton Cotterell, or Rangeworthy, request Messrs. C. to employ threats or intimidations to oblige their workmen in Lancashire to join us; the fact is, the Journeymen Hatters of Lancashire groaning beneath the oppressive burdens imposed upon them by their Masters, wrote to the men in London, and also to us—not calling us into combination to injure our Masters, but to prevent further inroads upon our privileges, and the already sufficiently small remuneration we receive for our labour. Your Correspondent states "some years ago we were in a seperate Union;" We call upon your Correspondent to explain why Messrs. C. sanctioned Horses to Chariots, from Chariots to Carriages, from common Tradesmen to Bankers, and now with your accumulated wealth you put forth your hand to spoil the industrious artizan to whom you owe your wealth, your all. Besides we read in your design the dissolution of every small firm throughout the United Kingdom; admitting you had 300 Apprentices, according to the number of your men, these 300 in the space of three years, would be capable of instructing 300 more sufficient to answer your designs, the result would be, all the Journeymen in your employ would be thrown out of work, and all the provincial Masters employing from 3 to 10 or more men, would by your progressive system of apprenticeship be obliged to dismiss their men, and become retailers of your goods, and thus from 5 to 6000 men would be deprived of the means of providing for their families, and reduced to penury and want.

Is this the conduct of men espousing Christianity? We appeal to you as Members of that respectable community, the Society of Friends, *Esto quod esse videris*, be what you seem to be, is the Motto of moral philosophy, will you

Figure 95: The reply from the Gloucestershire journeymen, 1834.

Christy's stockpile of hats did their job. The firm sat out the furore until the first Stockport men went back to work in November. North and south were split. The GNCTU collapsed and there was 'apathy in the trade union world'.[297] The Gloucestershire men held on with the Londoners until an attempt from Frampton Cotterell to seek terms in January was stopped by the 'Fair Trade'. Thomas said he would have anyway refused to meet the men.[298] The remaining Stockport men sent a deputation to London in February to settle on Christy's terms, including the reimposition of *standing money*.[299] It took a visit from Mary, Luke Fowler's wife, to London at the end of March to make

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[297] 'The GNCTU effectively ended at the end of 1834 when treasurer James Hall left the country 'with such of the Union's funds as he could lay his hands on' (*New Moral World*, 17/10/1835, cited in Cole, *Attempts*), p. 149. Giles, 'Felt-Hatting', p. 130.

[298] Turner, *First Shop*, pp. 165-166.

[299] CA, 12/11/1834, 2/2/1835.

Thomas relent. The Gloucestershire men were left impoverished and hungry.[300] In April, Thomas recounted Luke Fowler turning on the 'Fair Trade' calling them 'damned rascals. It's all your union which has starved us and makes me go without a coat to my back and if my wife had not gone to London and softened the hearts of the Masters we might all have laid down here and died and rotted'. Fowler took his revenge by refusing work to the beaten strikers 'whose mouths' water' and by treating them 'very ill'.[301] Many of the men owed money and were afraid to return for fear of being forced to pay a 'large amount of contribution toward the liquidation of debt contracted at Frampton Cotterell'.[302]

Christy's became a largely non-union business although there were always union men, continuing strikes, and attempts at coercion. With the trade under threat from the silk hat, wages for *ruffers* fell on average from 18s to a little over 9s a week between 1835-1844.[303] Employees were made to sign a declaration that they would not belong to a trade union and 'this tactic was widely used in the confrontation atmosphere of 1834'.[304] Burn saw the great strike as 'disastrous inasmuch as when the men laid down their arms the gate

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[300] CA, 4/4/1835.
[301] CA, 4/4/1835. Smith, *Felt Trades*, p. 261.
[302] CA, 14/3/1835.
[303] CA, Handbill, hat ruffers, Stockport, 1844.
[304] T M Parssinen, and I J Prothero, 'The London Tailors Strike of 1834 and the Collapse of the Grand National Consolidated Trades' Union: A Police Spy's Report', *International Review of Social History*, Vol. 22, No. 1, 1977, fn. 1, p. 83. See a similar position with the London tailors (Wallas, *Francis Place*), p. 201. Also Galton, Select Documents, Section 21, pp. 159-162.

of the factory was not only closed against them, but against every member of the 'Fair Trade' then and forever!'.[305]

Conclusions

Most debate on workers' combinations in the eighteenth century labours under the unhelpful stricture of the Webbs which limited the definition of a trade union to organisations having a permanent and *continuous* existence.[306] However, the Webbs did agree with Ashley and 'allow that the habit of acting together in certain ways, which we find to characterise the journeymen of the eighteenth century, had been formed in a much earlier period'.[307] Rule found 'few historians would now accept the Webbs' insistence on 'continuous association'; Dobson recorded at least fifty trade unions before 1800 among a variety of skilled trades; and H A Turner deduced that in the cotton trades 'continuous association' did not 'necessarily require formal organisation, rule books or recognised leadership' but rather the 'natural association of common experience'.[308]

The village feltmakers seemed to be born into conflict with the merchants of Bristol. There seems little doubt that the hatters were one of the first trades to *tramp* and that this led to an early national organisation. Chase saw that the

> stirrings of any organised movement is likely to have fallen upon a minority of active spirits; and the men who had the courage to

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[305] *HG*, 'Retrospect', 2/5/1887.
[306] Webbs, *Trade Unionism*, p. 1.
[307] Ashley, *Surveys: Historic and Economic*, cited in Webbs, *Trade Unionism*, fn. 1, p.13.
[308] Rule, *Labouring Classes*, pp. 20-30; Dobson, *Masters and Journeymen*, pp. 22-26; Turner, *Cotton Unions* (London, Allen and Unwin 1962), pp. 45, 50-54.

> organise an illegal union, the ability to conduct its correspondence and finances, and the knowledge to petition Parliament or consult with attorneys, were likely also to have been no strangers to the *Rights of Man*.[309]

Perhaps Chase had in mind Thomas Paine's view that 'personal labour is all the property [working men] have. Why is that little, and the little freedom they enjoy, to be infringed?'.[310] While the hatters did maintain independence in their craft and in the manufacture of hats, very few of them managed to build a business that transcended their roots. Conditions in the industry reduced to 'an infinitesimal chance the journeyman's prospect of becoming himself a master' and, in turn, provided 'the passage of ephemeral combinations into permanent trade societies'.[311]

Burn's claim that the hatters were the first to 'uphold the value of their labour and to support each other in case of turnouts' may not always be true, but there can be no doubt about their long-term commitment.[312] Apprenticeship regulations, even long after they lost their legislative grounding, were regularly invoked to protect 'various operatives who have from youth studiously devoted themselves'.[313] The men's primary focus moved to keeping up wages against 'ignorant adventurers'.[314] The cheaper feltmakers of South Gloucestershire found themselves in the crossfire between stronger unions and determined

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[309] Chase, *Early Trade Unionism*, p. 81, citing Thompson, *Working Class*, p. 546.
[310] Thomas Paine, *The Rights of Man* (1791-1792) on the Combination Acts.
[311] Webbs, *Trade Unionism*, p. 6.
[312] Burn, *Glimpse*, Chapter 2, pp. 39-64.
[313] Pufpaff, *Manuals*, pp. 53-54.
[314] Pufpaff, *Manuals*, p. 53.

masters. As the villagers improved their skills, the 'Fair Trade' was in danger of losing its 'virtual monopoly of the best trade'. The Londoners set out to reduce country competition by raising country wages because, without this action, they could foresee the whole of their trade leaving London.[315] As for the masters, Tufnell, commented, while paraphrasing Adam Smith

> Masters are always and everywhere in a sort of tacit, but constant and uniform combination, not to raise the wages of labour above their actual rate ... We seldom, indeed hear of this combination, because it is the usual, and one may say the natural state of things. Masters too sometimes enter into a particular combination to sink the wages of labour even below this rate. These are always conducted with the utmost silence and secrecy, till the moment of execution, and when the workmen yield, as they sometimes do without resistance, though severely felt by them, they are never heard of by other people.[316]

The local hatters were unfortunate in that Christy's was the most focussed and determined firm as it became the industry's first large nineteenth-century capitalist employer.[317] Hatters, later keen participants in radical activity, matched that enthusiasm with a readiness to embark on strikes.[318] Tufnell noticed that strikes were 'hardly ever resorted to, except by those, who habitually receive high wages'; William Taylor added 'when trade is prosperous'.[319]

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[315] Smith, *Felt Trades*, p. 226.
[316] Tufnell, *Character,* p. 99; Smith, *Wealth*, Chapter VII.
[317] By 1834, Christy's employed 'more men by half' than any firm in Great Britain and was paying £2,000 per week in wages (Giles, 'Felt-Hatting'), p. 116.
[318] Green, *Artisans to Paupers*, p. 128.
[319] Tufnell, *Character*, p. 86. William Cooke Taylor, *Factories and the Factory System* (London, 1844), p. 94.

Most workers in Bristol's organised trades believed that their position markedly deteriorated from the 1820s, and identified two major related causes: 'the intrusion of large-scale capital into marketing arrangements and the growth of surplus labour'.[320] This argument seems to validate the hatters' stance against the desire of the newly-arrived London manufacturers to increase the apprentice pool. Burn thought that the hatters in the first half of the nineteenth century fought

> a constant struggle on the part of working men to obtain what they considered a fair share of the profits resulting from their labour; but their employers, not unreasonably, considered that they were the only real judges in the matter. It is much to be hoped that the period of strikes and turnouts has become things of history in this country, for in the past they have been simply so many social tyrannies which had been legalized to combat the tyrannies which capital enables men in power to exercise over their workpeople.[321]

[320] David McNulty, 'Bristol Trade Unions in the Chartist Years' in Rule, edited, *Formative Years*, Chapter 10, p. 222.
[321] *HG*, 'Retrospect', 2/5/1887.

9 The villages: London factories, 1755-1855

Before 1750, the South Gloucestershire feltmakers worked for Bristol's hat manufacturers and haberdashers. There was no sign of direction from outside of the region. Yet, by 1824, George Ravenhill, speaking for the London hat manufacturers, believed that the 'manufacturers at Winterbourne are not masters absolutely for themselves, they are piece masters and under the control of masters in London, putting out the work either on commission or for a salary'.[1] The Bristol connection, if not lost, was considerably weakened by the collapse of the slave and colonial export trades. In 1886, a hatter, looking back to the first half of that century, recalled that

> it may appear somewhat strange, that [many London makers] had all their making done in the provinces. Winterbourne and *Oldlands Common*, in Gloucestershire, were great centres of the making processes. The bodies made, stiffened, and rolled off in these places were then sent to London to be dyed and finished ready for the market.[2]

Some of these London manufacturers relied completely on the villagers for the production of felt hoods, many ready stiffened to the required basic shape. The hoods were forwarded to London where finishers added style and fashion. Skill levels in South Gloucestershire evidently increased as some

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[1] 'Second Report of the Select Committee on State of Law in United Kingdom respecting...Combination of Workmen', 1/3/1824, p. 76, *House of Commons Parliamentary Papers*. NB: This quote has been used with the substitution of the correct 'Winterbourne' by 'Gloucestershire' thus considerably widening its import (but it is still likely true).

[2] The firms recalled were 'Mayhew & White, Bowler & Beckerton, China Bowler, and others whose names have escaped my memory' (*HG*, specially contributed, 'The State of the Felt Hat Trade in the Early Part of the Century', 1/11/1886), p. 632.

provincial makers moved from the manufacture of the coarser types of hat to finer qualities and were able to compete with the London makers.[3] What factors drove this turnabout?

For much of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the London hat industry was successful with its main manufactories clustered on the south bank of the Thames around Bermondsey. Despite many vicissitudes, the industry was bursting at the seams, fed by overseas demand, stimulated by the influx of skilled religious refugees, and protected at home from foreign competition. In 1755, in recognition of a closet *status quo*, the London Feltmakers' Company repealed its rules restricting piece work and the employment of workmen outside of the city.[4] Even the secretary of the Feltmakers was already complicit in illegal employment of 'outdoor men'.[5]

The London trade was now able openly to examine its operations in order to reduce manufacturing costs and overheads, and to escape the monotony of strikes over apprenticeship and wages. Labour was up to one-third cheaper in the provinces where existing concentrations of men in towns like Atherstone, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stockport already served the regional cities. In South Gloucestershire, in particular, the men were renowned for the cost

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[3] Housley, *Development*, p. 19.
[4] From the 1600s, the London Feltmakers' Company conducted a vigorous campaign to keep feltmakers under its influence. This campaign and the u-turn of 1755 with the repeal of rules restricting piecework and employment of foreigners are discussed in LGL, MS/01570/IV, *London Feltmakers Court Minute Books*; Unwin, 'Trade Union', p. 403; Corner, 'Tyranny', p. 163.
[5] Giles, 'Felt-Hatting', p. 115.

effective quality of their work honed on their skills with lesser wools, which were generally in use in previous centuries, and were passed on in their subsequent training. As well as the lower rates, a

> considerable saving was effected both in shop rent and price of coals ... There were, however, no better stuff felt hatters than the Gloucestershire men in the United Kingdom ... there were numbers of bodies made in which there was only an ounce & a half of stuff![6]

In 1777, London entered a trade-wide strike as journeymen faced a concerted move by the manufacturers to gain control over craft entry through a new act of parliament.[7] The master hatmakers, led by George Vaughan (the first in line of three with the same name) and John Collinson, petitioned and then gave evidence as they tried to break a spiral of wage demands supported by the hatters' monopoly on trade entry.[8] Despite gaining a resounding victory with the repeal of the men's right to impose apprenticeship restrictions, manufacturers found they were little better off. The men continued to enforce the Elizabethan ways.[9] The new legislation brought angry confrontations and hastened decisions to relocate workshops. The great shift from capital to countryside, with its cheaper raw materials, experience of piece work, and hungry and, supposedly, less truculent workforce, moved from a steady flow to a flood. Writing almost 200 years later, John Christie-Miller recalled that his company relocated to 'escape the regulations of the London Fair Trade Union'

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[6] *HG*, 'Reminiscences', 1889. 'Stuff', a mixture of wool and fur used to make felt hoods.
[7] 17 George III, c. 55 / c. 56 (1777).
[8] *House of Commons Journal*, Vol. 36, 5/2/1777, p. 119; 18/2/1777, pp. 192-3.
[9] Discussed in Chapter 4: *Monopolies, 1550-1855*.

and wished to avoid 'relying on Gloucestershire hatters who worked on a commission basis for London firms'.[10]

Only a few London firms were established in South Gloucestershire before 1777, but in the next twenty or so years control slipped inexorably away from Bristol. Skilled feltmakers were out of work following the decline in the plantation trade and the rise of the North American manufactories. New, seemingly secure, investment from large, experienced companies was attractive to the men running small village workshops. The money men from London were welcomed as they brought a seemingly endless supply of new orders. Their market reach in England overshadowed that of the Bristol wholesalers who were mostly restricted to South Wales and the West. Christy's, for example, was more a cash than a credit business with a low number of debtors.[11]

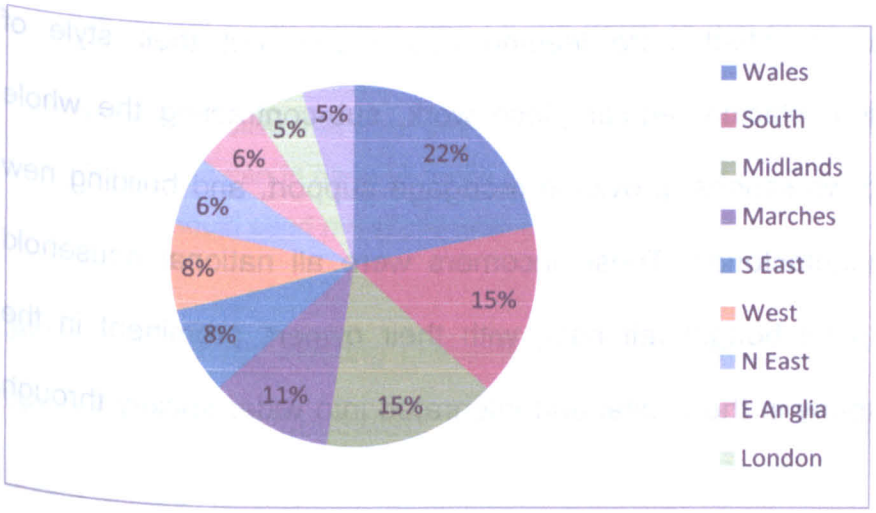

Figure 96: Distribution of Christy's sixty-five debtors, 1833, 1835.

[10] Christie-Miller, *Feltmakers*, pp. 16-17.
[11] CA, B/P/2/4.

Working for the Londoners opened up the greater trade of the rest of Britain and of the world at large. The addition of the regional feltmakers also increased the Londoners' manufacturing capacity to the levels needed to take best advantage in the mid-eighteenth century of the surge of uniform hats bought through the capital by the newly-formed organisations of police forces, fire and postal services, and the railways, and for the ever-present wars.[12]

There is no contemporary master list of these London firms in South Gloucestershire. It is a case of slow discovery, tracking occupants through the general wash of archival records and correspondence, and local histories, as well as extensive field work.[13] About thirty London-based manufacturers invested between 1750-1820. Many of them are confirmed in handbills of two meetings listing resolutions agreed by the London master hat manufacturers met to discuss strikes affecting South Gloucestershire in the 1830s.[14] All of the firms so far identified were leading businesses, but their style of commitment varied: placing regular piece work, sub-contracting the whole output of existing workshops, providing mortgage support, and building new medium-scale manufactories. These incomers were all national household names to those who bought felt hats, with their owners prominent in the Feltmakers' Company in the capital and integrated into wider society through

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[12] Hoppit, *Risk and Failure*, p. 177. The police, for instance, added a military style helmet to their distinctive uniform after 1852 (Bentley, *English Criminal*), p. 6. The Crimean War, yet to come, was a huge boost to the industry.

[13] Land taxes, maps, poor law, census, tithe agreements, petitions, inclosures, encroachments, leases. For the current list, Appendix 65: *London Manufacturers, 1753-1874*.

[14] CA: 24/3/1831, Museum Tavern, Blackfriars Road; 9/10/1834, Wing's Hotel, Stanford Street.

links to royalty, parliament, banking, and the arts. Among them, Bicknell & Moore, Christy, Dando, Hall, Harris & Warner, Rickards & Morris, and Vaughan, left occasional physical traces at Frampton Cotterell, Oldland Common, Rangeworthy and Watley's End. Many others have not been found: there is no remaining chain from them to the myriad of local workshops. Very few business records of the villagers survive; it is unlikely that many of the small firms kept any formal account of their day-to-day dealings. Much information comes from chance findings. For instance, Josiah Jefferies had two felting batteries, perhaps fourteen men, in two premises at Oldland Common. Jefferies wrote to Bermondsey in 1818 looking for work when Christy's announced it would stay in Frampton Cotterell:

> I have taken the liberty to right (sic : recte *write*) to see if you have any work to put out to make...my to batries are quite privet to keep the work apart and I will in deavour to have it well done to plese you if possible I can if you pls to try me with a few and if you wants my cannecton I can have it sent by the [post] of this plase and if you wants a Bond for the work I can get a friend to be bound for me for it I am apt to belive that I can plese you with the work if you plese to give me a trial I can in gage to make you 6 or 7 dozen a week if you plese if you should send me some work pls to direct for me.[15]

Jefferies gave his existing customer as a reference: John Harris & Son of Winchester Place, Southwark, and a short walk from Christy's Bermondsey Street factory.[16]

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[15] CA: J Jefferies to Christy & Co, 16/12/1818.

[16] The Harris family was Quaker (as was the Christy family) and ran a considerable hatmaking and haberdashery firm in Cannon Street, London, for at least fifty years under various partnerships (The Library of the Religious Society of Friends, London, London & Middlesex Digests; also correspondence with Cornelia Warner of that family).

The premises of the large family firms of Hall's in Frampton Cotterell and Rickards & Morris (later with Powell) in Watley's End were clusters of rough outbuildings and lean-tos gathered around a *shop*, fine Georgian residences near the centre of the village community where the entrepreneur or his manager lived.[17] The *shop* could more correctly be termed a *warehouse*, since little work was undertaken in this 'depot for raw materials and half-finished goods'.[18] Hall's *Step House* was possibly a manufactory headquarters from 1755; and Rickards and Morris's *The Old Factory House*, with a lintel stone inscribed 1770, was part, eventually, of a six-acre estate.[19] The founder of Hall's, Thomas Hall, Master of the London Feltmakers' Company in 1718-1719, was the owner of 'the greatest house in Europe for exporting hats'.[20] In his workshop in Tooley Street, Southwark, Hall employed over 120 of 'all sorts of people'. He lived above in a home of fifteen rooms; his country house was in Chertsey. He was probably of a Dissenter family, and left an estate in 1722 of £16,000, equivalent to the richest of London merchants. Money owed him showed customers in New York, Antigua, Lisbon and Amsterdam.[21] Both Morris and Powell had considerable connections to

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[17] James R Farr, *Artisans in Europe, 1300-1914* (CUP, 2000), p. 137.
[18] Housley, *Development*, p. 17.
[19] After exclusive access to house documents, a local historian, Jeffery Spittal, described the building as a three-gabled farmhouse 'certainly' rebuilt in 1753 by 'Mr Hall' (C Jeffrey Spittal, *Frampton Cotterell Local History Trail*, pamphlet, 1977), pp. x-xi. The 1770 date is carved above the front door. NB: 'The hat making industry flourished from 1770 at Watley's End and Frampton Cotterell' (Ludwell, *Winterbourne*). Also, Linda J Hall, *The Rural Houses of North Avon and South Gloucestershire* 1400-1720 (City of Bristol Museum 1983). Auction of Morris's estate, 1/7/1863 (*The Times*, 24/6/1863).
[20] £12,000 worth of hats a year in the 1730s (Weinstein, *Feltmakers*), p. 37.
[21] Weinstein, p. 37, says the Halls were a Quaker family, but no independent verification has been found. There are no references to them in the Quaker records. Thomas Hall left money for a non-Conformist school in Horselydown, and the executors for some of the family are known Dissenters, some of them Baptists (Private, Harry Duckworth 2009). Will 20/3/1722 (TNA, PROB 11/584).

the John Collinsons, father and son of London, who chose to build their major new manufactory in Chesterfield. For many years, Collinson senior was partner to the hatting firm of the Vaughan family.[22]

Figure 97: Hall's, Step House, Frampton Cotterell, left; Morris's, The Old Factory House, Watley's End.

George Vaughan the second, of Watley's End, about 1808, and Bicknell & Moore of Oldland Common, from about 1812, established sizable operations, each employing variously up to one hundred men.[23] The first George Vaughan, founder of the business, was a go-between between the Prince Regent and playwright Richard Brinsley Sheridan in his time of distress.[24] The foreman of Vaughan's, Stephen Francombe, and his wife, were known as the

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[22] *The Times*, 21/2/1807. *Kent's Directory*, 1768, and after. Collinson witnessed George Vaughan's will, 28/11/1780, proved 5/1/1781 (TNA, PROB 11/1073).

[23] The records are spasmodic, but sufficient for purpose. There are no Winterbourne land tax assessments for the Langley and Swinehead Hundred between 1800-1807; Vaughan and his first foreman Stephen Francombe are together in 1808, 1810, 1812, 1821, 1823. Also, speculatively, Francombe baptised four children together in Winterbourne in 1809, a possible stricture of his new and devout employer. Thomas Jeffery paid land tax of £1 18s in 1812, a sizable sum which suggests a factory, for 'the Moors' in Oldland Common (both GA, Q/Rel).

[24] George 'Hat' Vaughan was the financial intermediary from the Prince Regent to Sheridan when the latter was out of royal favour in 1815, in poverty and near death (John Murray, review, 'Memoirs, Journal, and Correspondence of Thomas Moore, edited by the Right Honourable Lord John Russell', three volumes, 1853, *The Quarterly Review*, Vol. 186, June 1853), pp. 239-310.

'king and queen of Watley's End'.[25] Vaughan's brother and sleeping partner, Henry, a co-scholar of Benjamin Disraeli, bought Constable's *Hay-Wain* and later presented it to the nation.[26] Henry was also a 'great Turner man'.[27]

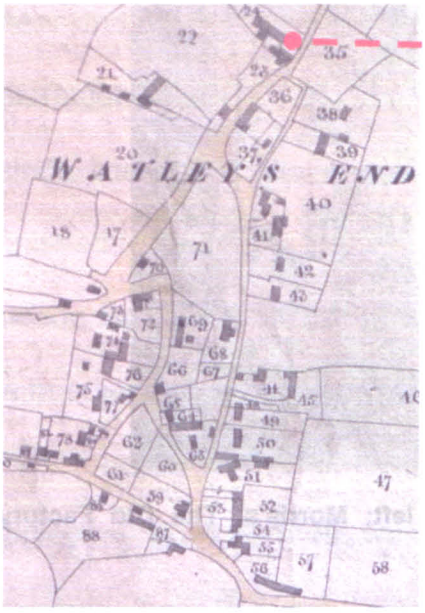

Figure 98: Vaughan's manufactory at Watley's End, next to Ebenezer Chapel and now under the entrance to York Gardens, 1841. The premises were auctioned in 1874 after being leased by local hatters.[28]

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[25] Elliott, *Winterbourne*, p. 63. Francombe married Hannah Pullin at Winterbourne, 25/4/1796. The Pullins of Frampton Cotterell were a considerable hatting family (distinct from the Pullen hatting family of Bristol) and, with the Francombes, were connected to many local hatting families around 1800, including Garlick, Harcombe, Hollister, King and Maggs (Winterbourne Parish records).

[26] Henry Vaughan bought *Hay-Wain* from Joseph Gillott, a Victorian entrepreneur and a key figure in the history of collecting and patronage from the mid-1840s. 'Gillott's adviser and agent William Cox bought the picture for him from the sale of George Young (1798–1880s) of Charles Street, London, and Appleby Tower, Ryde, Isle of Wight, at Christie's, 19 May 1866 (lot 25) for £1,365. Young, a surgeon, was a friend of Constable and a patron of many British painters, for example, Collins, Nicol, Faed, Webster and Clarkson Stanfield. Christie's archive copy of the Young sale catalogue reads 'Gillott resold to H Vaughan & given by him to the National Gallery March/86' (Jeannie Chapel, 'The papers of Joseph Gillott, 1799–1872', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 20(1), 2008), pp. 37-84. Also, *The Times*, 17/3/1886, p. 6. Vaughan kept this cutting until his death in an album / scrapbook on *Hay-Wain* (Charles Baker, *J M W Turner, The Vaughan Bequest*, Edinburgh, National Galleries of Scotland, 2006), p. 120; Viola Barrow, 'Turner in the National Gallery', *Dublin Historical Record*, Vol. 44, No. 1, Spring 1991, pp. 6-16. Obituary, *The Times*, 27/11/1899.

[27] John Ruskin, quoted in B Dawson, *Turner in the National Gallery of Ireland* (Dublin, 1988), p. 39.

[28] *Tithe*, 1842 (BRO, EP/A/32/44). Also, *Winterbourne Inclosure Award*, 1831 (GA, Q/RI/161). Elliott, *Winterbourne*, p. 63. *The Times*, 1/4/1876.

William Moore ran an extensive army accoutrement makers, employing over a thousand men with a retail outlet for the officer class on the corner of Old Bond Street and Piccadilly.[29] In 1834, William Mayhew supported a mortgage of £900 to George Burgess in Willsbridge.[30] Mayhew & White operated from fashionable premises at 89 New Bond Street in Mayfair; from where he sold wholesale and 'did a very excellent business in high-priced hats'.[31]

Figure 99: Mayhew & White, Willsbridge, 1890. The manufactory was in the nearest house on the left.[32]

[29] LGL, Sun Fire Archive: MS 11936/465/901632 (30/1/1815) and intervening to 550/1208885 (6/1/1836). In 1834, Moore claimed: 'Our House has been established in a very large Trade for more than a century and most of the articles we supply are manufactured by ourselves, so that, at times, we have in our service some thousands of hands: and certainly never less than from £500 to £700 weekly as paid by us even at the slackest season of the year, and not infrequently it is four of five times as much' (Shropshire Archives, *The Attingham Collection*, Moore letter to Lord Melbourne 12/10/1803, 112/3/334; TNA, C 13/563/19, bill, Bicknell & Moore, 1837 Court of Chancery).

[30] Deeds of the *Queen's Head* (Courage Western Limited, EE/E/30, Packets 1&2). Also Wells, *Time-Honoured Cheer,* pp. 47-49.

[31] This property is now a part of the *Historic Houses Association* and was, in 2008, occupied by the 300-year-old legal firm of Boodle Hatfield and, they have asked to be noted, still retaining some of their original customers. Mayhew & White is recorded in all the London Trade directories of the period. *HG*, 1/6/1889.

[32] Picture courtesy: Oz Warren.

The London manufactories did not follow any distinct building pattern. All two-storey premises had a row of narrow, firmly-closed upstairs windows which signalled feltmakers' garrets. Gusts of wind were not allowed to disturb carefully-measured, and sometimes expensive, hair and fur allotments, called 'scales' from their weighing out.[33] Access to clean water for kettles, steaming and dyeing was essential. Workshops seldom relied on river water, but used springs and wells with the water heated in larger establishments in a boiler with, as at Christy's, a large chimney.[34] Space was always at a premium: bales of wool and fur, and a pulley to raise them to the feltmakers on the upper floors; several kettles, often with seven men standing about in a circle of four yards' diameter; coal for the fires; chemicals for felting kept with strong dyes in a separate store; carpentry for a turner to make variously sized wooden blocks for hat shaping, and for sturdy delivery packing cases to be nailed down against petty thievery; a drying area for several hundred felt hoods; perhaps a finishing shop with irons for curling, paper and board for strengthening, and, later, laces and bows for trimmings; and a large yard to accommodate fibre and coal deliveries, and the pack horses and carts to carry the hats to meet Pickford wagons, turnpike stagecoaches, Severn trows, canal barges, merchantmen at dockside and, later, steam trains.

David Landes offered three necessary technological substitutions for a 'revolutionary' factory: rapid, regular, precise and tireless machines in place of

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[33] Dodd, 'Hat-Factory', pp. 143-146.
[34] *Inventory of goods belonging to Messrs Christy's at their establishment Frampton Cotterell, Gloucestershire*, 13/7/1855 (CA, B/P/2/26).

human skill; inanimate sources of power for human effort; and new and more abundant mineral materials replacing vegetable or animal substances.[35] None of these changes applied in pre-1870 South Gloucestershire feltmaking. The hatters' workshops with attached outhouses, and the cottages where the villagers took in outsourced felt for laying and planking, were unpowered and lacking machines capable of repetitive work. The nearest to a moving tool was likely the apprentice-turned well crank.

Randall found that the requisite capital for wool cloth factory building was available in the West of England through its 400 paymaster clothiers with a 'large and proletarianised workforce with specialist knowledge'.[36] Despite being 'much less adaptable' the change provided a 'launching pad for transition into a factory-based economy'.[37] These were also truisms for the hatters, but their new bosses were from London and came to poach existing cheaper and higher craft skills; their new manufactories were never conceived to hold machines.

The late mechanisation does not mean that the leading masters were hostile to invention. Turner mentions both the dyeing cage, a mechanical dipping tool, and the blowing machine, first used by other firms for cleaning and grading in

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[35] David S Landes, *The Unbound Prometheus, Technological Change and Industrial Development in Western Europe from 1750 to the Present* (CUP 1969), pp. 41-123; adapted from a summary by Berg, *The Age of Manufactures*, p. 171.

[36] Hudson, 'Proto-Industrialisation', p. 39, quotes 'at least 3,500 broadcloth manufacturers' in the West Riding under the *kaufsystem* in which small masters bought wool from dealers and worked seasonally with their families in their own homes, relying on mixed subsistence for their living.

[37] Randall, *Luddites*, pp. 23-26.

1816, receiving a 'good deal of attention in the Christy correspondence of the 1830s'.[38] Machinery became prominent much sooner in the American hatting industry. William Miller Christy (co-founder of forerunners to both the Midland and National Westminster Banks) declared in 1834 that 'we must soon be looking to [machinery] or we shall become antiquated and the Americans on one side and the Continent of Europe on the other will be twenty years in advance of us'.[39] At the same time, the firm looked to replace its boiler and engine power supply at Bermondsey and to buy a second-hand engine for a planned factory near Stockport.[40] A potential need for 24HP was identified for twelve applications varying from cutting logwood to grinding shellac, none of them core hatmaking processes. There were another twenty years of inaction before Christy's next showed serious interest in American hatting mechanisation when William Miller Christy inspected a felt body-making machine. He reported later that the value was more to an American hatter than to an English one.[41] 'First, the rate of labour is much greater and the

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[38] Turner, *First Shop*, pp. 59-60.
[39] 28/3/1834 (CA, P/2/6).
[40] This new factory at Fairfield Mill in Droylsden was sold before it was complete, confidence affected by a slump. However, it remained in the family as the home of Christy's Towels, another William Miller Christy venture (*100 Years of the Royal Turkish Towel, 1851-1951*, W M Christy & Sons, Manchester, 1951). It was originally intended as a 'Frampton in Lancashire without its abuses', an idea floated during the heat of the 1834 strike (CA, P/2/6, Christy partner letter 14/10/1834).
[41] The debate on the American technological superiority in some industries begins with higher wages with E Rothbarth, 'Causes of the Superior Efficiency of USA Industry as Compared with British Industry', *The Economic Journal*, Vol. 56, No. 223, pp. 383-390, September 1946. It was associated with the great availability of free land by Peter Temin, 'Labour Scarcity and the Problem of American Industrial Efficiency in the 1850s', *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 26, No. 3, September 1966, pp. 277-298; and H J Habakkuk, *American and British Technology in the Nineteenth Century* (CUP 1967). Also Russell I Fries, 'British Response to the American System: The Case of the Small-Arms Industry after 1850', *Technology and Culture*, Vol. 16, No. 3, July 1975, pp. 377-403, discusses the best known example of American superiority.

saving consequently greater; second, it will form a body lighter and more even than hand bowing and the demand in America is lightness.'[42]

It is the twin manufactories of the Christy dynasty at Frampton Cotterell, built about 1840 that have come in popular imagination to typify South Gloucestershire hatting. Christy's regional influence was crucial, but it was only a late part of the story as it was the last London firm known to arrive. The story of this factory will be used here as an example for its country cousins using the extensive Christy Archive at Stockport.

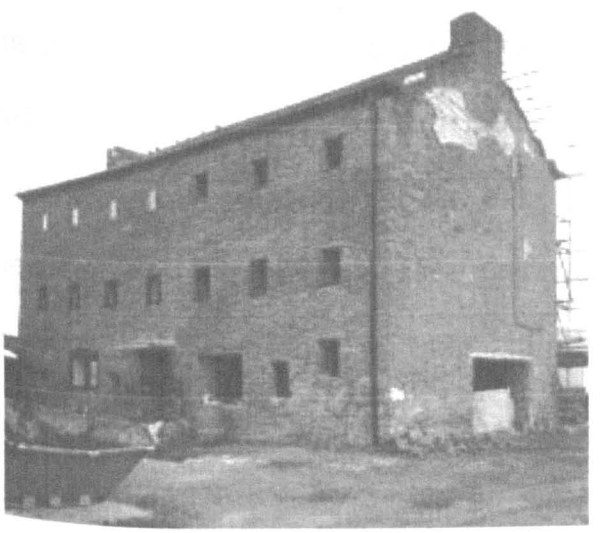

Figure 100: The rearmost Christy manufactory being converted to housing in 1991.[43]

Christy's, a Quaker family, was established in Gracechurch Street in London in 1773. Their Bermondsey factory opened in 1813 and, that year, the firm came to Frampton Cotterell with six men to 'make trial at this place'.[44] Five years later, the 'trial' factory and adjoining land was bought for £600 from

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[42] Turner, *First Shop*, p. 76.
[43] Picture: English Heritage, 1991, NMR, BB92/29440.
[44] CA, letter 18/7/1834.

Samuel Holder, a leading member of a prominent local feltmaking family.[45] The premises quickly grew to a large collection of warehouses and outbuildings.

'Premises at Frampton 11mo ~ 1818' is a simple sketch of the factory that Christy's bought.[46] Extensions were considered to increase living space to the rear and to add a second storey. The street wall facing onto Park Lane had two breaks, one to access the foreman's five-room cottage and the other, a passage between factory buildings. The passageway led to the 'old plank shop [kettle]' on the right and a 41x18 feet bow room. Some improvement was already made with a 50x15 feet 'new plank shop' and a new 12-foot circular stove. These two large plank shops reflect the extra capacity needed by Christy's to deal with the work put out to the village feltmakers. Not shown on the sketch, the well was behind the building near to the entrance to the later rear factory. The well was deep and suggests that apprentices had a hard time hauling water to feed the kettles.[47]

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[45] Letters 14/7, 7/10, 5/11/1818 (CA, B/P/2/26).
[46] CA, B/P/5/46.
[47] Albert Rogers, descendant of later owners, described how it took his father one and a half large lorry loads of rubble to fill (Personal conversation, 2008).

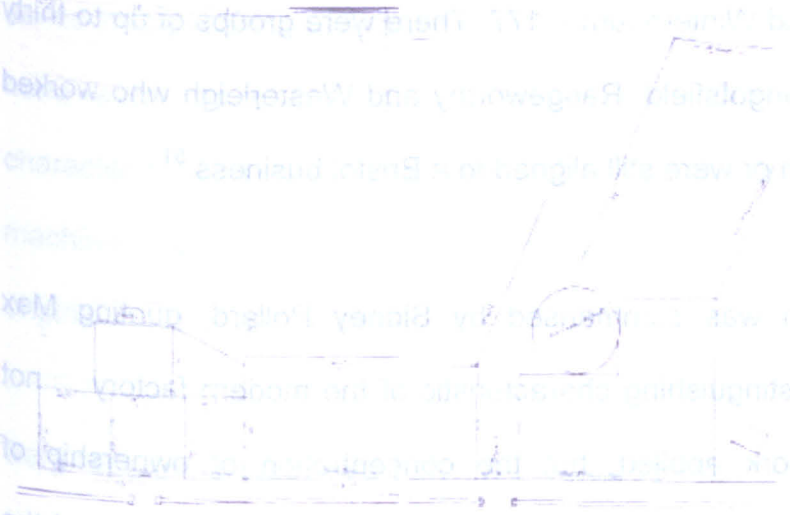

Figure 101: Sketch of Christy's Park Lane premises with the road at the bottom, 1818.

Christie-Miller later emphasised the continuing sub-contract nature of the business as they 'gave work out to be made up in cottages and farms where families worked as teams. We bought the products from them and marketed them in London and other big cities. The country labour was cheaper than the labour from the big towns'.[48] The firm employed a combined 'in' and 'out' workforce of at least 200 journeymen in Frampton Cotterell, Winterbourne and Rangeworthy for bodymaking and ruffing, including village small masters, like Fowler, Holder and Palser in Frampton Cotterell, Maggs and Hollister in Watley's End, and Roach in Rangeworthy, who each sometimes employed upwards of twenty men.[49] Village employment managed from the capital after 1820 sometimes reached 500 men, some 60% of the village feltmaker workforce.[50] In 1841, total employment in the country was 639 and concentrated in the three main villages of Frampton Cotterell, 196; Oldland

[48] Christie-Miller, *Feltmakers*, pp. 16-17.
[49] Censuses 1841-1861.
[50] There were 984 hatters in Bristol and South Gloucestershire in the 1841 census.

Common, also 196, and Winterbourne, 177. There were groups of up to thirty men in Iron Acton, Mangotsfield, Rangeworthy and Westerleigh who worked either for a London firm or were still aligned to a Bristol business.[51]

The Christy approach was summarised by Sidney Pollard, quoting Max Weber, as 'the real distinguishing characteristic of the modern factory ... not the implements of work applied, but the concentration of ownership of workplace, means of work, source of power and raw material in one and the same hand, that of the entrepreneur'.[52] Thirsk captured the moment as 'an intermediate stage between the mechanized factory using water power and handwork done at home [and] the shop that brought together a number of handworkers'.[53] However, for the hatters, at least, one remark did not apply. Thirsk saw that 'there could be minute division of labour, hence a decreasing need for general skill, and constant supervision could ensure a more reliable volume of production'. Because it was the craft skills themselves that were so valued, labour division was never on the agenda in South Gloucestershire; quality and speed of work were expected. Maxine Berg quotes Karl Marx as 'setting out a stage in the development of the capitalist labour process which he termed manufacture ... a phase of handicraft workshop industry which preceded that of modern machine production ... a workshop of handicraftsmen carrying out one or a variety of tasks'. Again, though, Marx saw this process

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[51] Appendix 66: *Gloucestershire men in the Christy files, 1853-1871* (a list of all the men working at Frampton Cotterell who were mentioned in Christy letters and in notes of factory visits).
[52] Pollard, *Genesis*, p. 18, from Max Weber, *General Economic History*, 1928 (Dover Publications, 2003), p. 302.
[53] Thirsk, 'Industries in the Countryside', p. 57.

as inevitably leading to a division of labour even 'though operations done by hand were still dependent on the skills of individuals and retained the character of handicraft'.[54] The word *factory* therefore better denotes a place of machinery while *manufactory* is reserved for a place demonstrating the original meaning of craft work.[55]

Berg reported a study into batch industries by Oliver Williamson in which the key disadvantages of the putting-out system as compared to factories were identified: 'high inventories, high transportation costs, poor work intensity, embezzlement and poor quality control, and poor adaptation to sudden changes in markets or techniques'.[56] None of these disadvantages applied greatly to the country hat manufactories: putting-out inventories were controlled by strict allocation; transportation was unaffected because the manufactories were in the same area as the putting-out workshops and the journeys between were carried out by men carrying pokes on their backs; timed piece work dealt with intensity; embezzlement, although a problem in London with beaver fur, was hardly mentioned in the region, and the feltmakers had no private wool hood market to make theft worthwhile; and, finally, fashion adaptation was not an issue as the feltmakers delivered hoods to order, not finished hats. While Christy's did much bow work on the

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[54] Berg, *Manufactures*, pp. 63-64. Karl Marx, *Capital*, pp. 489-90. Smith, *Wealth*, Vol. 1, p. 9.
[55] A Ure, *Philosophy of Manufactures* (London, Charles Knight 1835), p. 13; 8 Victoria, c. 15, *An Act to Amend the Laws relating to Labour in Factories*, 6/6/1844; Paul Mantoux, *The Industrial Revolution in the Eighteenth century, An Outline of the Beginnings of the Modern Factory System in England* (London, Cape 1961), p. 38.
[56] Berg, *Manufactures*, p. 71. Oliver E Williamson, *Markets and Hierarchies: Analysis and Antitrust Implications* (New Jersey, USA, Old Tappan, 1983).

premises, most wet work was done in village kettles. 'People can still remember seeing men carrying forms in bags over their shoulders'.[57] The occasional hatter's kettle might still be found at the back of local sheds.[58]

Harold Housley, for his thesis of 1929, had the great advantage of talking to many older senior men of the trade who had close experience of the opening of English manufactories. Feltmakers transferred their place of work from the home or small workshop to the factory and 'endeavoured to retain that liberty and freedom of action which he had always enjoyed'.[59] The feltmaker was not prepared to start work at any given time, 'nor to have his day regulated by the punctuation of a factory bell'.[60] He would not agree to work regularly and often took leave for several consecutive days 'until shortage of money compelled his return'. As at home, he had his drink and tobacco about him and the 'consumption of intoxicating liquors [fetched by the young apprentices] proceeded throughout the working day with occasional sojourns for rest'. However, there was a serious underlying social effect: women and children who used to help their men at home had no place in the factory.

When these new factory hands experienced the extended scale of operations, they introduced their own means of regulation and of maintaining law and order:

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[57] Geoffry Christie-Miller, undated (CA).
[58] One such was reported found and destroyed, unrecognised until too late, in Frampton Cotterell in 2009 (email, 2010, Trevor Thompson, chairman, Frampton Cotterell and District Local History Society).
[59] Housley, *Development*, p. 92.
[60] Housley, *Development*, p. 93.

> It was, they held, no concern of the master that hatters might fight in shops, or that they should attend the shops in drunken condition; they agreed among themselves that these transgressions were not desirable, but these were not the concern of the employer, they were matters for the consideration of the fraternity; such undesirable occurrences did not reflect upon the good name of the master, but on that of the fraternity and therefore the journeymen made and enforced their own laws for the maintenance of their own standard of respectability.[61]

During 1822-1823, Christy's secured its water supply from a spring in a field across the road.[62] Water became an increasing problem and, in 1834, the local foreman updated management:

> We have had a capital improvement since you were here as it regards supplying the factory with water from a large pond made in the field facing the dwelling house which has its level above the [buck] we had then in the yard and thence supplys all the batteries - 13 in number - and all of them in eight rooms.[63]

The two surviving Christy insurance records show no serious building took place before 1828 when the whole property was covered for £900. Stock and utensils were worth £430; each of the warehouses with bow room and lean-to used for steaming hats, £200; hatmakers' stove with plank shops, £220; and a proof shop with a stove and clipping room over rear, £50.[64] By 1832, significant changes were evident when the insurance cover was raised to £2,000: a new warehouse, £320; stock and utensils almost doubled to £800;

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[61] Housley, *Development*, p. 386.
[62] CA, Unattributed note, 22/1/1822).
[63] CA, Luke Fowler to Christy's Stockport, 25/7/1834. The 'large pond' is near the current southern junction of Sunnyside and St Peter's Crescent.
[64] LGL, Sun Fire Archive, MS 11936/513/1082551, 11/11/1828.

making shops over a rear room, £400; and stove and proof shop, and dwelling house, £240 each.[65]

The inclosure maps of 1831 support this development and show Christy's factory in Park Lane as one long building fronting the road.[66] Christy's now owned Overwells, a large piece of land opposite their factory with its large pond and covering much of the area between Park Lane and the current South View. The firm used the Inclosure Act to tidy up their encroaching frontages, buying two lots: 94, a long strip along Woodend Road; and 106 on a corner at Woodend Green.[67]

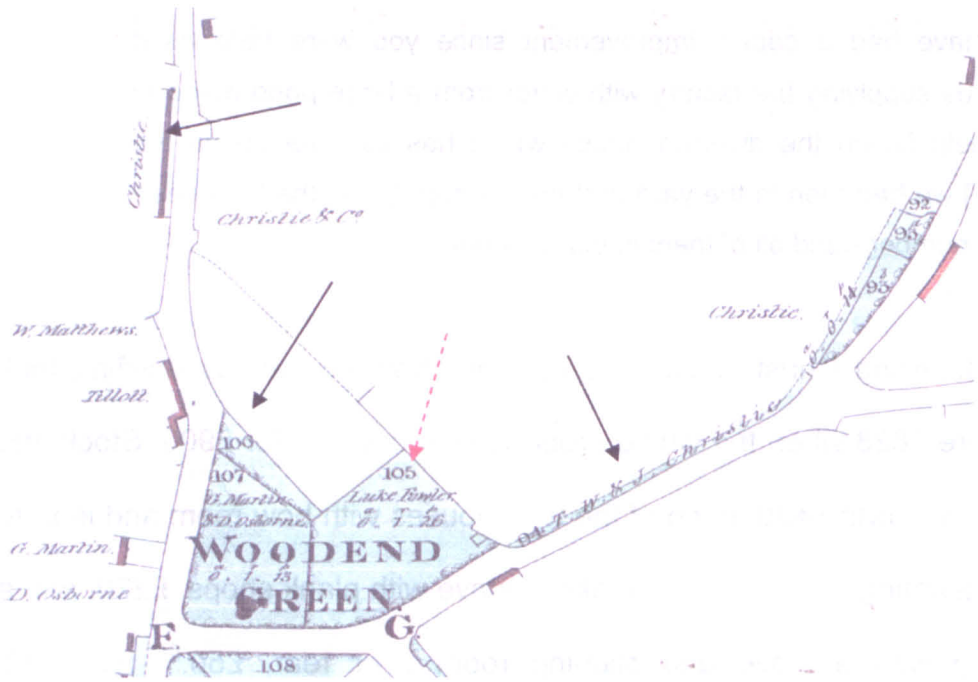

Figure 102: Christie's long factory, 1831, top left; their inclosure allotments numbered 94, 106. Foreman Luke Fowler's allotment (dotted arrow) is numbered 105.[68]

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[65] LGL, Sun Fire Archive, MS 11936/530/1143178, 18/7/1832.
[66] GA, Q/RI/67.The dimensions of the frontage of the current road-side cottage and house, while similar to the 1818 plan and 1831 map, are in no way a match.
[67] 6 George IV, 1825.
[68] Names on unnumbered plots showed existing ownership to the boundary.

The 1841 tithe map shows that Christy's was now a considerable landowner on both sides of Park Lane, perhaps adding ideas of expansion to the safeguarding of their water access.[69] The River Frome was a third of a kilometre away and over 10 metres below the factory. However, two large pieces of open land stretched in a point to within a few feet of the river bank at Parsonage Bridge. There are persistent local rumours of a pumping station, but no paper or structural evidence has been found.[70]

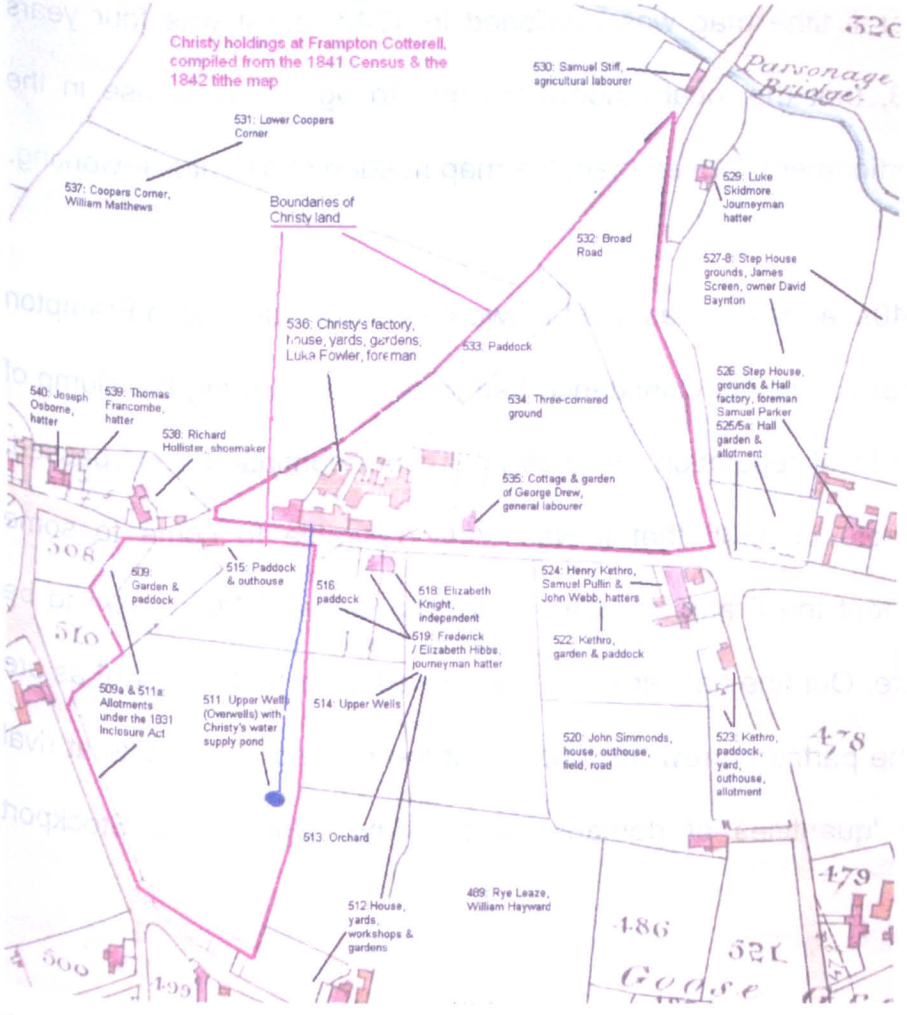

Figure 103: Christy's holdings at Frampton Cotterell compiled from the 1841 census and the 1842 tithe map. The pond and its culvert line at Upper Wells have been imagined.

[69] Frampton Cotterell Tithe, 31/5/1841 (BRO, EP/A/32/19).
[70] Conversations, Thompson, Frampton Cotterell and District Local History Society.

The manager's cottage is on the left of nine factory buildings; further plots included two paddocks, possibly for transport horses; an outbuilding; and a cottage and garden occupied by a general labourer.[71] None of the four main manufactory buildings stand today. The roadside structure is on a line with the current one, but the twin, purpose-built, two-storey buildings behind are not there and the one that stands in its place has all the characteristics of a building that has grown in bits and pieces as circumstances require. The Frampton Cotterell tithe map was published in 1842, but it was four years before, in 1838, that the local landowners met to agree on its use in the upcoming apportionment.[72] Even then, the map needed substantial reworking.

Early in the 1840s, a major investment in two new main buildings in Frampton Cotterell was not surprising. Confidence had increased following the slump of the 1830s. The local reputation for quality felt work continued unsurpassed. One Christy wrote in 1835 that it was 'very desirable to come to some arrangement about the Frampton place [after the strike].[73] Men ought to be got to work there. Our fine hats are not near so well done [at Stockport] as are Frampton'.[74] The partners grew anxious about the making of silk hats at rival Stockport with 'quantities of damages every day'. 'Unless the Stockport

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[71] The labourer's cottage is now 203 Park Lane, although much extended and altered. It is, therefore, the oldest remaining building of this Christy estate.
[72] Meeting: 24/9/1838, New Inn, Frampton Cotterell; memorandum (TNA, IR18/2789).
[73] Discussed in Chapter 8: *Combination, 1700-1835.*
[74] CA, Letter from John Christy to Stockport partners 20/2/1835.

people can do this work as low as others, the trade will all go from them and the place will be shut up'.[75]

Figure 104: The manager's cottage to the left of the front Christy's manufactory, now a private house. The cottage has an '1840' dating in the wall above its garage.

Later descriptions of Frampton Cotterell recall 'top floors of each of the high buildings [housing] bowers, each man working in front of a small window with a partition between each. In the roof now are the pegs from which the bows were hung. There is still a bow left'.[76] Buchanan's review in 1969 was of two three-storey buildings arranged on a north-south axis to give even light to the two long sides, together with a manager's house and various subsidiary buildings. The easterly [away from the road] is slightly larger than the other main block, with eight bays illuminated by small windows along each side of

[75] CA, Letters from Henry Christy 15/6/1848, 21/6/1848. Also Smith, *Hat Trades*, p. 189.
[76] Freehand reminiscences of Geoffry Christie-Miller, undated (CA, B/VV/5/28).

its upper two floors... [the other] ... had seven bays down each side of its top two floors, with one corner bay occupied by a staircase'.[77]

In the 1850s, work concentrated on feltmaking and planking with the manufactory co-ordinating villagers who took the basic felts and used their home kettles to produce a felt hood. Hoods were sent to Christy's finishing shops in London and Stockport and, consequently, carriage was a continuing preoccupation. Frampton Cotterell was on an old packhorse route which crossed the Nightingale Bridge and passed within yards of the Christy factory.[78] Pickford's held the Frampton Cotterell contract in 1853 when seven parcels of twenty to thirty Ormond and Brabent felts were transported to Stockport over seven months; Pickfords still provided a service to Stockport in 1864.[79] Their route was by local contracted carriers to Bristol, then by the River Severn to Worcester and canal to Birmingham and several canal and road options.[80] In 1844, Yate railway station opened on what would become the Midland Railway Bristol to Gloucester line.[81]

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[77] R A Buchanan and Neil Cossons, *The Industrial Archaeology of the Bristol Region, Miscellaneous Industries* (Newton Abbot, David & Charles 1969), pp. 140-41. This report followed an earlier, more cursory piece by Kenneth Hudson, *The Industrial Archaeology of Southern England (Hampshire, Wiltshire, Dorset, Somerset & Gloucestershire east of the Severn)*, Appendix 2, '*The lesser industries of Bristol*' (Dawlish, David & Charles, 1965), p. 189.

[78] During the late eighteenth century goods were carried on a number of stout draught horses, panniers either side, twenty to thirty strung together in caravans. The man in charge rode on a cob beside the caravan armed with a blunderbuss, pistol and cutlass. 'Many a conflict took place, but Pickford men as a rule held their own; hence the saying of the day - The Bold Pickford'. Each horse carried 700 lbs over 40-60 miles a day' (TNA, RAIL/148).

[79] CA, B/P/4/30.

[80] TNA, RAIL/171. There were Pickford agencies in the hatting centres of Atherstone, Bristol, and London and Stockport between 1829-35 (TNA, RAIL/129). In 1828, hats were carried at 140s a ton from London to Manchester, 130s a ton to Macclesfield (TNA, RAIL/130). An 1827 line drawing shows a Pickford four-horse farm cart with an inserted roofed box with rails on

A full inventory of the factory made in 1855 shows its ground floor near to the road was on a long-term let at £12 a year to a local hatter.[82] Fifteen work areas were identified: main and back warehouses; old and new clipping rooms; large stove room; making shop next to the stove and another unused next to the water tank; steaming, proof and finishing shops; bow garrets on the second floors; counting house; yard; and foreman's cottage (inventoried separately on the same day with detailed household furniture and fittings). The feltmakers' bow garrets contained fifty-seven hurdles; the making shop had two plumbed-in lead kettles with sixteen planks (there were twenty-three other planks variously stored); a warehouse had 120 making blocks and seventy-five one-piece round crowns - all evidence of considerable capacity at full use.

Christy's maintained a clear divide between their production costs and expense accounts.[83] Production was always viewed as the cost per dozen hats comprising the men's wages and the price of the wool or fur. In 1863 and 1864, for example, the average annual cost per dozen at Frampton Cotterell was 13¾d reducing to 13½d.[84] The men were paid weekly, and negotiated their rate by the dozen, varying by style and size. They were unpaid if there

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top for outside carriage. Owners or servants could travel with their goods, clinging on as best they could (TNA, RAIL/146).

[81] The Bristol end opened in 1835 using the GWR broad gauge. It was the first railway into Bristol, beating the Bath to Bristol line by five years. Yate Station was opened when the line was extended northwards towards Gloucester in July 1844. The Brunel station shed, station master's house and turntable bay survive (Ron Strutt, available www.geograph.org.uk, accessed 17/7/2009).

[82] Appendix 56: *Inventory of Goods, Frampton Cotterell, 1855.*

[83] CA: 1864: B/WW/4/29, 1865: B/VV/4/5.

[84] CA, Letter 13/11/1863.

was no work. Wool was often sent from London and doled out locally to precise formulae, reflecting hat quality.

Manufactory expenses were some £500 a year, reduced by around £100 for cottage rents and apprentice earnings.[85] Foremen Luke Fowler and Edwin Curtis received together £47 7s 6d in 1864 rising to £55 the next year. Annual rent of £140, 29% of total expenses, was paid to the owners, three Christy brothers. In 1818, Christy's paid £600 for the property, very probably in cash; unusually, Christy's was so profitable that it was consistently self-funded. Between 1818 and 1864, Christys deducted rent of £6,580 against a known building capital expenditure of £1,320.[86] Gross expenses were annualised over ten years at 10% and included management expenses, repairs and new equipment, for instance a replacement boiler in 1865.[87]

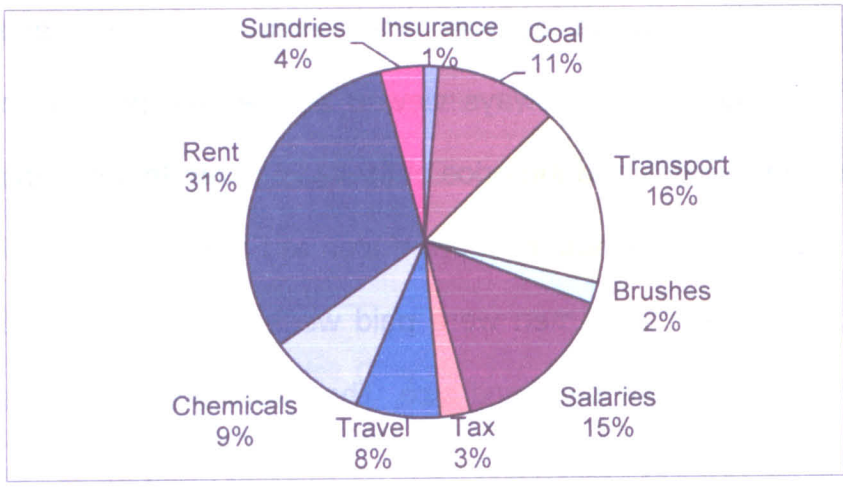

Figure 105: Christy's expenses at Frampton Cotterell, 1864-1865.

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[85] Appendix 67: *Accounts for Christy's, Frampton Cotterell, 1864-1865.*
[86] LGL, Sun Fire Archive, MS 11936: 513/1082551, 11/11/1828; 530/1143178 18/7/1832.
[87] The boiler house cost £78 16s 11d, the boiler £124 6s 6d and £4 to carry in from Stockport and manhandle from Yate Station; painting was £2 3s 6d.

With rent accounting for almost a third of expenses, management had little room for controlling costs: consumables like coal, chemicals, transport, brushes and, to a degree, travel were driven by manufacturing volumes. Few avenues were left untried. On a management visit, one Christy told the men to 'try and dry the felts on the grass, hedges and walls instead of heating the stove' which used nine hundredweight of coal each week.

Conclusions

The change in affiliation from Bristol to London happened within fifty years. Both cities were committed to profit. However, the relationship with Bristol was based on a long-term partnership once the dust of the seventeenth-century monopoly was passed. It was softer; the men were their own work masters and knew and met the city hatters regularly. When the Londoners arrived there was a brief honeymoon. Within a few years the older craft generation of owners left their firms. For the new breed it was profit and the rights of ownership before respect or a vestige of what today would be called 'employee relations'. The difference for the villagers was that they now worked in manufactories rather than village workshop or backroom and were dependent on a single work provider.

A combination of Christy's expense records, a full manufactory inventory in 1855, and the machinery auction records (including the boiler) of 1876, show

a complete lack of mechanisation.[88] N E R Crafts reasoned that this stasis generally came about not only because 'the triumph of ingenuity [was] slow to come to full fruition, but also [because] it does not seem appropriate to regard innovativeness as pervasive'.[89] Eric Hobsbawm recognised that even the genuine capitalist entrepreneur could be in two minds about machines. The belief that he 'must inevitably favour technical progress as a matter of self-interest has no foundation'.[90] Perhaps two common aspects of business decision making are worth considering: first, a predisposition among the principals to continue courses of action with a successful history, often in the face of mounting new evidence; second, the human and debilitating effects of fear, uncertainty and doubt. Many change decisions, seemingly obvious to observers or those with hindsight, are not enacted because the principals are emotionally engaged and would not or could not act. This was in large part true with Christy's up to 1855. The founder, Miller Christy, was steeped in the mysteries of the trade having graduated as an apprentice. The first two generations of the firm admired craft skills, not machines.

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[88] Inventory, 13/7/1855 (CA, B/P/2/26); auction (*BM*, 15/7/1876).
[89] N E R Crafts, *British Economic Growth during the Industrial Revolution* (Oxford, Clarendon 1985), p. 87.
[90] E J Hobsbawm, 'The Machine Breakers', *Past & Present*, No. 1, February 1952, p. 64.

10 The villages: Prayer, 1739-1900[1]

Many of the behaviours of the village hatters from the late eighteenth century, while not in themselves definitive measures of religious conviction, can be used as indicators of devotional integrity.[2] As a poor people, they became financial indebted by their determination to build numerous chapels. They were prominent at church and Sunday School. John Wesley sought to make his followers a 'peculiar people' with marked changes in personal habits.[3] He sought a determination to worship according to newly-defined rules, even when the result was dissension among friends, family and work colleagues in concentrated village communities. Rule felt that regional diversity meant that one must treat with caution all attempts to write generally of the influence of religion on the working class.[4] If the 'godly' can be satisfactorily counted, and their piety sufficiently demonstrated, can religious influence be found in the hatters' responses to issues where Methodism had planted its moral flag?

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[1] This chapter concentrates on the relationship between the village hatters and Methodism, with the emphasis always being on the hatters, and results from following the research evidence. Particularly, this subject has met with a deal of apprehension from academic historians. In an attempt to be even-handed, coupled with a determination to proceed, a number of opinions were sought, all of them valuable and gratefully received: from Bristol University: the thesis supervisors, and Dr Kenneth Austin, Religious History; and John Moore, Honorary Research Fellow in Economic and Social History; on Methodism in Bristol: John Edwards, *A Methodist Guide to Bristol and the South West* (Peterborough, World Methodist Historical Society 1991); The Rev Dr David Hart, superintendent of the Bristol and South Gloucestershire Methodist Circuit; Dr John K Lander, *Itinerant Temples, Tent Methodism 1814-1832* (Carlisle, Paternoster Press 2003); Jeffrey Spittal, recent honorary librarian, Methodist New Room, Bristol; members of the congregation of Salem Chapel, Watley's End; and further afield: staff at the Methodist Studies Unit, Oxford Brookes University; and Dr Clive Field (for curriculum vitae, http://clivedfield.wordpress.com/about-me, accessed 2012).

[2] Rodney Stark, Charles Glock, *American Piety the Nature of Religious Commitment, Patterns of Religious Commitment* (University of California 1968).

[3] Thompson, *Working Class*, pp. 41-42.

[4] John Rule, 'Methodism, Popular Beliefs and Village Culture in Cornwall, 1800-1850', Chapter 3, Robert D Storch, edited, *Popular Culture and Custom in Nineteenth-Century England* (London, Croom Helm 1982), p. 48. Also, Grassby who felt that 'psychic behaviour – motives and intentions – is not susceptible to precise measurement' (*Kinship*), p. 17.

These included sobriety, when the men's use of alcohol was notorious; the ending of the slave trade, which provided a significant proportion of the men's employment; the effect of evangelical fervour and discipline on the family; and a 'persistent industriousness' in employment and a respect for their masters' rights, when the intention of the radical London hat manufacturers was to break the power of their conservative trade union at almost any cost.[5]

The story of Methodist beginnings across South Gloucestershire in the late 1730s is dominated by the conversion of the Kingswood colliers when George Whitefield, John and Charles Wesley, and John Cennick went into the fields to preach their message to those who were distant from the parish churches.[6] Methodism emerged in part from the 'vacuum' created by the national Church, 'now so remote from its parishioners'.[7] Wesley was in no doubt of his success for he claimed that 'Kingswood does not now, as a year ago, resound with cursing and blasphemy. It is no longer the seat of drunkenness, uncleanness,

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[5] The questions reverses the position on Methodism and trade unionism proposed by Halévy: 'Forty years ago it was fashionable to regard Methodism as an expressly counter-enlightenment and counter-revolutionary movement that helped enslave its members to a new economic order based on factory production and raw capitalism' (David Hempton, *Methodism, Empire of the Spirit*, Yale University Press 2005), p. 11. Élie Halévy, *A History of the English People in the Nineteenth Century*, (1) 'England in 1815' (1913, reprint London, Benn 1970), pp. 389-485. For support for Halévy, Thompson, *Working Class*, pp. 44-46. Margaret Spufford, 'Can We Count the 'Godly' and the 'Conformable' in the Seventeenth Century?', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. 36, No. 3, July 1985, pp. 428-438; also, *Figures in the Landscape: Rural Society in England 1500-1700* (Aldershot, Ashgate 2000), Chapter XIV. Wellman J Warner, *The Wesleyan Movement in the Industrial Revolution* (London, Longmans, Green 1930), pp. 139-149.

[6] John Brewer and John Styles, edited, *An Ungovernable People, The English and their law in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (London, Hutchinson 1980), p. 125. Jonathan Barry, 'Introduction', Barry and Morgan, edited, *Reformation and Revival in Eighteenth-Century Bristol* (BRS, Vol. 45, 1994), p. xi.

[7] Morgan, *Wesley in Bristol*, p. 7. Palgrave-Moore, *Understanding*, p. 11.

and idle diversions that lead thereto. It is no longer filled with wars, fightings, clamour and bitterness with strife and envying'.[8]

A reclaiming of the hatters' involvement is overdue; they were close to the colliers, geographically, by family, in food riot, and, when in economic straits, as alternative employment. While the Church of England did not become a presence in Kingswood until the building of St George parish church in the 1750s, this separation was just as applicable to the hatters, but lasted longer.[9] The church's outreach in Winterbourne, St Michael's Room, was built on the outskirts of Watley's End in 1888, the mission huts in the hamlet in 1922, over one hundred years after its first non-conformist chapel.[10]

Outdoor village meetings were common, but not always successful, nor were they led immediately by John Wesley. In the first recorded outdoor meeting among the hatters in 1654, Quakers John Audland and John Camm addressed a large gathering at Winterbourne.[11] There were Friends' meetings in Westerleigh, Sodbury, Thornbury, Olveston and Alveston. Despite this, at Frampton Cotterell with a population of around three hundred, Friends

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[8] 1739, Wesley, Journals, Vol. 25, pp. 701-702, cited in Morgan, *Wesley in Bristol*, pp. 19-20. Wesley, *Letters*, vol. 5, p. 121 for a repeat in 1768 of his position. For a Quaker view: 3/1791, *Sarah Fox Journal* (Woodbrooke College, Birmingham, Bevan-Naish Collection), p. 255. Also, Thomas Olivers, *A defence of Methodism: Delivered extemporary in a public debate, (but now considerably enlarged), held in London, December 12th, 19th, and 26th, 1785, Have the Methodists done most good or evil?*, p. 28, cited in Warner, *Movement*, pp. 176-177.

[9] George Eayrs, *Wesley and Kingswood and Its Free Churches* (Bristol, 1911), pp. 93-97. A Braine, *The History of Kingswood Forest* (1891, reprint, Bath, Kingsmead 1969), p. 225. Also, Brewer and Styles, *Ungovernable People*, p. 126.

[10] Elliott, *Winterbourne*, pp. 48-49.

[11] J Camm, *'The Memory of the Righteous Revived', being a brief recollection of the books and written epistles of John Camm and John Audland* (London, 1689).

'numbered only about two dozen or fewer'.[12] Whitefield gave his first sermon in Kingswood in 1739 close by the Oldland Common hatters and 'not above two hundred' attended. At the next meeting there were about two thousand, at the third from four to five thousand.[13] Whitefield spoke at Coalpit Heath adjoining the Frampton Cotterell hatters in the same year and estimated an audience of two thousand.[14] Cennick preached at Kendalshire, next to Winterbourne, in 1739. The Rev D C Hearle points out that it is the 'infrequency of Wesley's visits to places north of Bristol' that is remarkable. Wesley was at Fishponds seven or eight times in his first year then not again. Directly among the hatters, he spoke at Kendalshire and Downend in 1740; at Westerleigh and Iron Acton once only, in 1744; in Winterbourne and Hambrook in 1761; and at Mangotsfield in 1781, forty years after coming to Bristol.[15] At Rangeworthy, the mob pelted Wesley with rotten eggs, stones and mud.[16] This kind of polemical reception followed Wesley for more than twenty-five years when he had to 'suffer and endure vile treatment from rude mobs', not least in 1740 in Bristol.[17] Hearle preferred to emphasise the effectiveness of Wesley's work within the movement. He described Wesley

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[12] C Jeffrey Spittal, 'Notes on the Local History of the Free Churches of Frampton Cotterell', *Workers, Worshippers and Waifs, Aspects of life and work in Frampton Cotterell c. 1820-1920*, Frampton Cotterell Local Studies No. 1 (Frampton Cotterell Local History Society, 2010), pp. 13-14, first published February-November 1987, *Zion News*.

[13] Rev H T Ellacombe, *The History of the Parish of Bitton* (Exeter, Pollard 1881), p. 213.

[14] Morgan, *Wesley in Bristol*, p. 14.

[15] Often mentioned visits by Wesley to Winterbourne in 1750 and 1752 are to Winterbourne, near Newbury. Wesley may also have visited Winterbourne 15/10/1761 as he was in the Kingswood area, but there is no specific mention in his sermon register (Peter Forsaith, Research Fellow of the Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History, Oxford Brookes University, email 14/6/2007).

[16] John B Edwards, *A Methodist Country Circuit in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century: The Downend Circuit 1804-1859*, pamphlet (1987) (The New Room Library, Bristol, Pamphlet Box 7), p. 1. Hearle, 'Frome Valley', p. 8.

[17] Robert F Wearmouth, *Methodism and the Common People of the Eighteenth Century* (London, Epworth 1945), pp. 138-164.

setting 'the villages and homesteads of Gloucestershire ablaze [with] extempore prayer, passionate preaching and the lively singing of hymns which made for spiritual revival in the valley of the Frome'.[18]

Wesley's New Room opened in Bristol in 1739.[19] The first of Whitefield's Tabernacles in the villages was in Park Road, Kingswood, in 1741, the year after he split with Wesley over predestination.[20] The colliers were the main members, but the local society list includes victuallers, spinners, plasterers, hatters, shoemakers and bakers.[21] Whitefield has no known further direct connection with the hatters except that one of his prominent followers was hat maker John Dando, and later the extended Dando family.[22] The Dandos were important hat manufacturers and noted Methodists in Watley's End, and in Bristol, London and New York. Earlier, John Dando was the 'principal instrument in introducing the gospel' into Dursley.[23] In 1747, the English Calvanistic Association met at Gloucester under Whitefield's guidance. Dando registered with others a house for public worship in North Nibley in 1749.[24]

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[18] Hearle, 'Frome Valley', pp. 8-9.
[19] *The New Room, John Wesley's Chapel, Bristol* (Jarrold Guide, anonymous, undated), p. 3. Bristol was a microcosm of all the tensions. 'There were heated exchanges in Bristol by 1770 when five or six separate Methodist societies accommodated different doctrinal emphases, including one linked with Lady Huntingdon' (Morgan, *Wesley in Bristol*), pp. 9-10.
[21] 26/10/1757, Wesley Collection (Pierpoint Morgan Library, New York City) cited in Morgan, *Wesley in Bristol*, pp. 12-13.
[22] For John Dando's early religious journey, David Evans, *As mad as a hatter! A History of Non-conformism in Dursley* (Stroud, Sutton, 1982). This history of the puritans and Whitefieldites of that area is named, not for John Dando's occupation, but from a contemporaneous description of the 'antics' of those who had seen the light. One son Stephen signed the lease for the Dursley tabernacle; another, John, was a Tabernacle trustee at Rodborough (Evans, *Dursley*), p. 74; (Rodborough Tabernacle, plaque).
[23] *Evangelical Magazine*, 4/1810, Obituary, p. 159 (Methodist Studies Unit, Oxford). Dursley Tabernacle, plaque.
[24] 2/1749 (GA, GDR/284).

The Countess of Huntingdon was a customer.[25] While seeking custom by letter he updated her on local preachers, John Hawksworth and Rowland Hill.[26] In 1775, the Association's Stancombe branch moved their meeting place into Dursley where the first signature on the legally required notification was that of Dando. 'Within five years of moving to Dursley, the society erected a proper meeting house, the first Tabernacle' and Dando was again amongst the registrants in 1760, and is commemorated there by a wall plaque.[27]

In 1745, the Moravians opened a chapel in Park Street, Kingswood.[28] There were no more chapels until a Baptist Church opened in Downend in 1786. The Methodists attended their open air meetings and 'gathered in their homes in prayer and Bible study and then encouraged preachers from the city to visit them'.[29] The first village Wesleyan chapel was, perhaps surprisingly considering the historiographical emphasis on the colliers, built by the hatters in Watley's End in 1787. It brought together cottage meetings which had taken

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[25] Selina Shirley, daughter of Earl Ferrers, born 1707; married, age twenty-one, Earl of Huntingdon; joined Methodists 1739; made Whitefield her chaplain 1748, Whitefield's followers known as the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion; established college in Trevecca, Brecknockshire, where her ministers were educated, 1768; financed the building of sixty-four chapels in England and Wales; died 1791 (Boyd Stanley Schlenther, *ODNB* 2004; online edition, 2008, accessed 7/2009).

[26] Letter from Dando to Huntingdon, 17/11/1771 (Countess of Huntingdon's Archives, The Cheshunt Foundation, Westminster College, Cambridge, F1/141). John Hawksworth, one of Huntingdon's itinerant preachers (Evans, *Dursley*), p. 76. Reverend Rowland Hill had a Tabernacle at Wotton-under-Edge. The son of a baronet, Huntingdon called him a 'second Whitefield'. In 1771, he preached at Stroud, Painswick, Rodborough, and to a 'great crowd' at Dursley (Tim Shenton, *Life of Rowland Hill: The Second Whitefield*, Darlington, Evangelical Press). An energetic man, travelling great distances, preaching continuously, he was said to have delivered 23,000 sermons. When in Dursley, he stayed up to six weeks with Dando, the house being 'ever open and might with all propriety be called the preacher's home' (Evans, *Dursley*), p. 80. Appendix 68: *John Dando to the Countess of Huntingdon, 1771.*

[27] 17/2/1755 (GA, GDR/292A).

[28] F H Tysoe, *Kingswood Moravian Church, 1745-1945* (Kingswood Press 1945), p. 3.

[29] Hearle, 'Frome Valley', pp. 8-9.

place for many years.[30] To mark the chapel's significance, an 84-year-old John Wesley detoured on a trip from Bath to Bristol to preach at its foundation.[31] Wesley reported that 'there was much rain before I began and a violent wind all the time I was preaching'.[32] Robert Curtis, hatmaker of Winterbourne, was one of those who bought the chapel's land.[33] Pennant stone for the walls was quarried in the village.[34] An additional piece of land was bought in 1796.[35] First called the New House, and later Salem, the preaching house was registered that year at Gloucester by a group of seven local men, including three hatters, led by William Pullin.[36]

The hatters and their families, manufacturers and craftsmen alike, dominated the early membership lists at Watley's End.[37] Standard work on the social background of Methodists accepted that initial gains were made 'almost

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[30] Hearle, 'Frome Valley', pp. 9-10. Wesley and Whitefield's school-house for the children of the Kingswood colliers was built 1739-40. Next door, Kingswood School, under Wesley's control, and intended for the boarding of fifty sons of Methodist ministers, was opened in 1748 (Eayrs, *Wesley and Kingswood*), pp. 49, 57-58.

[31] Wesley's text, Matthew 20:4, was the parable of 'The Workers in the Vineyard' which centres on the claim by a landowner of a right to pay labourers hired late in the day at the same rate as those hired at its beginning.

[32] 17/9/1787 (*Wesley's Journal & Diaries 1787-1791*, edited W Reginald Wood and R P Heitzerater), Vol. 24.

[33] The land was bought for ten guineas from George Rolph, steward of the manor of Thornbury Castle, on the understanding that work would be completed within one year (Victor Eaves and Margaret Johnston, *Salem Methodist Church, Watley's End: Salem 200, 1787-1987* (Private 1987), pp. 1-11.

[34] Eaves and Johnston, *Salem*, pp. 1-11.

[35] 26/6/1792 (BRO, 4105/2).

[36] GA, Vol. 319a, Gloucester Diocesan Register, p. 229.

[37] *Watley's End chapel subscriptions*: 25/03/1826, John Pullin and wife, Henry Woodruffe and wife, Miss Eliz Amos, Mrs Curtis, Mrs Dando, Mr George Lowe, Mrs Pritchard; 1831, Geo Howes, Mrs Phillips, Job Witchell, H Woodruff, John Pullin [2], Powell (pew) Amos, Geo Flook jun, William Pearse, Mrs Fowler, Mrs Emanuel Maggs, Mrs Harcomb, Mr Jas Curtis, Mrs Daniel Spill (pew), Mrs Emanuel Curtis, Mrs Tho Howes, Robert Curtis, Wm Spill [of the waterproof factory at Hackney Wick], Mrs Hannah Maggs, Aaron Maggs, Hannah Webb, Abraham Flook jnr, Mrs William Simmonds, Mrs Robert Maggs (BRO, 35231/404).

exclusively amongst manual workers and the destitute'.[38] Further analysis found that, by the end of the eighteenth century, Methodism was disproportionately concentrated among skilled workers and, by 1801-1803, reached twice the national average in this group which included both miners and hatters. Methodism was less than the norm in all other occupational groups, with the exception of merchants, manufacturers and retailers, where it reached the norm.[39]

	National population 1759	National population 1801-1803	Methodist members 1759-1799	Roman Catholic population 1767
Gentry/ professions	4.9	4.7	2.2	1.1
Merchants/ manufacturers/ retailers	13.0	9.4	9.4	10.8
Skilled craftsmen	23.8	24.7	57.5	30.4
Agriculture, excluding labourers	24.6	14.6	12.2	31.1
Maritime/ naval/ military	5.6	11.2	1.7	2.4
Labourers/ servants/ paupers	28.1	35.4	16.9	24.1

Table 10: National occupations (%), 1759, 1801-1803, compared to those of English Methodist male members, 1759-1799, and of Roman Catholics, 1767.[40]

There were wider fluctuations than the table demonstrates. For instance, the minimum-maximum range for skilled workers was 22.5-84.8% reflecting the

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[38] 'These findings run counter to much Methodist historiography, which has extolled the achievements of the early preachers in making converts among a labouring class which was often largely untouched by organised Christianity' (Clive D Field, 'The Social Structure of English Methodism: Eighteenth-Twentieth Centuries', *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 28, No. 2, June 1977), pp. 199-225. Also by Field: 'The Social Composition of English Methodism to 1830: A Membership Analysis', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*, Vol. 76, No. 1, Spring 1994, pp.153-178; 'Religious Statistics in Great Britain: An Historical Introduction', British Religion in Numbers, Discussion Paper 001, November 2009.

[39] Clive D Field, 'English Nonconformists: Part 3: Occupations (Methodists) and conclusions', *The Local Historian*, Vol. 40, No. 4, November 2010, p. 292. Also Gilbert, *Religion and Society*, pp. 63, 67.

[40] Taken from Field, 'Membership Analysis', p. 165. Field's classifications derive from the work of Peter H Lindert and Jeffrey G Williamson. The data comes from 108 membership lists containing about 80,000 individuals and includes 1,465 members, Bristol, 1797 (BRO, 21780/22/a); 226 members, Gloucester, c. 1797 (GA, D3187 1/3/6); 2,685 members, Bristol, 1818 (BRO, 4034/C1/1(b)), Also, Field, 'Membership Analysis', pp. 155, 170-174.

diversity of local and regional economies.[41] For the years 1803-1837, ascendancy of the craftsmen was still more marked, 63% of Wesleyans coming from this sector as against 24% of the population generally.[42]

From the founding of Salem at Watley's End until Methodist unification in 1932, the movement was torn by schism.[43] Across England, over a dozen larger sects formed, recombined, and built their chapels: there are over 400 different non-conformist buildings in South Gloucestershire.[44] In some cases, the root disagreement was doctrinal. In other cases it was organisational: Who should own the chapels? Who should appoint the preachers? However, the underlying discontent often centred on Wesley's organisational legacy. Halévy saw the foundation-stone of the Wesleyan organization as the 'systematic denial of local autonomy':

> Class leaders, stewards and local preachers were chosen not by the congregation, but by the superintendent of the circuit. Local preachers could only be promoted after a long series of tests. Every precaution was taken to preclude local trustees from ownership of the chapel ... The central government was John Wesley himself who exercised an undivided and despotic rule. He created in the Methodist connection a tradition of clerical authority not to be easily destroyed.[45]

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[41] Detailed new research over the last thirty years has added complexity (David Hempton, *Methodism and Politics in British Society 1750-1850*, London, Hutchinson 1984), pp. 1-2.
[42] The ratio of colliers to the total also exceeded the secular mean (Field, 'Social Structure'), p. 202.
[43] Lander, *Itinerant Temples*, p. 1. W J Townsend, H B Workman and George Eayrs, *New History of Methodism*, Vol. 1, London, Hodder & Stoughton 1909, pp. 423-433, 437: 'A conflict between two not irreconcilable views, or rather between two types of temperament that might have been taught patience'.
[44] *Non-Conformist Heritage Trail* (South Gloucestershire Council, Museum and Heritage Section, 2005).
[45] Halévy, *English People*, p. 413. Morgan, *Wesley in Bristol*, p.15.

John Wesley's death in 1791 left the movement in the hands of the Legal Hundred, so large that it had 'only the contentious asset of prescribed authority at its effectual command'.[46]

Thomas Humphries, the colliery manager at Frog Lane pit, and five others, sought support in 1794 for a first chapel to be erected in Frampton Cotterell 'in the centre of the hatting manufacturers ... and close upon the confines of the extensive colliery in the parish of Westerleigh'.[47] The village was described as a 'neighbourhood enveloped in gross darkness, infidelity and iniquity ... These people are poor and foolish and do not know the Way of the Lord'.[48] The Zion chapel was not Wesleyan Methodist, but Congregational and was built the next year for £354.[49]

Among the first of the breakaway movements from Wesleyan Methodism was the 'thoroughly working-class' Primitive Methodists, which took its name in 1812, but which began at an outdoor meeting in Cheshire in 1807. The desire was to bring the gospel to 'as many sinners as possible'.[50] Wesleyan bureaucracy met these camp meetings with the 'same opposition which the

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[46] Spittal, 'Free Churches', p.16.
[47] Spittal, 'Free Churches', p.15.
[48] Hearle, 'Frome Valley', p. 14, citing *Bristol Christian Leader*, No. 45, 15/8/1895, p. 226.
[49] Beginning in Frampton Cotterell in 1812, Zion's Sunday Schools soon taught 220 pupils, three years later this rose to 290, and the movement spread to White's Hill, Earthcott Green and Westerleigh (Spittal, 'Free Churches'), p.16. Sunday Schools first started in Gloucester in 1780 and spread rapidly through the county. A replacement building for Zion was erected in 1873 for £1,558. In 1968, the Zion United Church was formed by combining the Congregational United Reform Church of Frampton Cotterell and three Methodist churches in Frampton Cotterell and Coalpit Heath (accessed www.zionunitedchurch.co.uk, available 2011).
[50] Hugh McLeod, *Religion and the Working Class in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Basingstoke, Macmillan 1984), pp. 26-30.

Church of England had formally displayed to the open-air meetings of Wesley and Whitefield' and expelled them.[51] A parallel group, the Tent Methodists of Bristol, conducted campaigns under canvas during the summer seasons and also established several chapels in the area. Anyone who joined the group in the Bristol area was 'liable to be expelled' from the Wesleyan community.[52] One chapel at Soundwell was known as The Colliers' Temple. Tent Methodists were 'entreated' to come to Frampton Cotterell in 1818 and, as a result, held three meetings each Sunday in barns at Frampton End among the hatter squatters.[53] Tent Methodism failed in the 1830s 'because of lack of leadership and organisation'.[54] Its adherents, if they had separated themselves from mainstream Methodism, returned to the fold. The Tent Methodists' legacy to Frampton Cotterell was a chapel built in Church Road in 1821. Funds were insufficient and the chapel in seven perches of grounds was sold for £7 to the Wesleyan Methodists in 1832.[55] Among the local trustees were 'five hat manufacturers', Samuel Long and John Hollister, both Frampton Cotterell; William Elliott of Dursley; Jospeh Foote of Winterbourne; and George Vaughan of London, a Watley's End hat factory owner.[56]

In 1833, the Primitive Methodists arrived in the eastern suburbs of Bristol. They met in private houses in Pucklechurch and Westerleigh and in

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[51] Halévy, *English People*, p. 416.
[52] Lander, *Temples*, pp. 96, 105-115.
[53] Spittal, 'Free Churches', pp.18-20.
[54] Edwards, *Country Circuit*, pp. 4-5.
[55] A bargain and sale, 18/9/1827, and an indenture of the transfer to the Wesleyans, 12/4/1832, which lists fourteen trustees, were held in 1997 by the National Westminster Bank for the current owners (Courtesy John Lander, email 15/5/2008).
[56] Somerset Record Office, A\CEG/2/3/3; BRO, 35230/60-73; Spittal, 'Free Churches', p. 20; Lander, Temples, p. 108.

Mangotsfield where their early witness was strongest.[57] They began their chapel ministry among the colliers and hatters at Two Mile Hill in Kingswood in 1841. Over the next fifty years eight more chapels were built among the hatters, particularly at Frampton Cotterell, Mangotsfield, Oldland Common, North Common and Pucklechurch. A tramping hatter, visiting the area, noticed the particular local effect of the Primitive Methodists who had made 'some little impression on the minds of the [hatters], but it was certainly not a civilizing one; one of the effects of their religious schooling was that of their jumbling profane and sacred things together, in which their old superstitions played no mean part, and it gave them a strong desire to give their children Biblical names'.[58] The last is certainly true for the hatters' baptismal records of the 1850-1860s are awash with Abrahams, Ebenezers, Isaacs, Isachars, Jacobs, Jeremiahs and Jobs.[59]

Despite the 'competition', the Wesleyan Methodists largely completed their early chapels among the hatters with eight more buildings between 1800-1825. In Rangeworthy, the northern edge of the hatters' concentration, four perches of land were leased for five shillings in 1819. The building was finished by the next year with a minstrels' gallery above the door at the back from where the singing was led by violins.[60] Among the trustees in 1837 were local hat manufacturer Charles Roach and others from hatting families

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[57] Hearle, 'Frome Valley', pp. 14-15.
[58] *HG*, 'Reminiscences', 1889. For John Wesley's position (Gilbert, *Religion and Society*), p. 72.
[59] Parish records: Frampton Cotterell, Oldland Common and Winterbourne.
[60] *Rangeworthy Methodist Chapel 1820-1970*, pamphlet (Rangeworthy Chapel Trust, 1970), (The New Room Library, Bristol Pamphlet Box 7), p. 1.

Packer, Flook and Ovens. The effect of these Wesleyan chapels on the established church was dramatic. The Wesleyan Methodist national membership reached 231,000 by 1813.[61] 'We have lost the people,' complained a vicar in 1833. 'The religion of the mass is become Wesleyan Methodism.'[62] The national religious census of 1851 revealed that total non-conformist attendance was very close to that of Anglicans.

In 1857, three breakaway sects joined to form the United Methodist Free Churches.[63] Twelve new chapels were built before the end of the century, many close to their Wesleyan forebears, and where some congregations were torn apart. When the reformers built the Bethel at Frampton Cotterell in 1851, that society lost thirty of its 130 members. There was a decline in pew holder subscriptions from thirty-seven in 1850, to twenty-eight in 1851, and twenty-one in 1853, all seceeders to Free Methodism. They included hatter Edwin Curtis and Sarah Farvis, wife of a hatter of Coalpit Heath.

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[61] Halévy, *English People*, p. 415.

[62] John Rule, 'Methodism, Popular Beliefs and Village Culture in Cornwall, 1800-1850', Chapter 3, Robert D Storch, edited, *Popular Culture and Custom in Nineteenth-Century England* (London, Croom Helm 1982), pp. 48-49, citing H Miles Brown, *Methodism and the Church of England in Cornwall 1738-1838* (unpublished PhD thesis, University of London, 1947), p. 170.

[63] The Wesleyan Protestant Methodists, formed 1815; the Wesleyan Methodist Association, 1834; and the Church of the Wesleyan Reformers, 1849. These three groups, as the United Methodist Free Churches, joined with the Methodist New Connexion, 1797 and based mainly in the North, and the Bible Christian Connexion, 1815 in the South West, to break formally with the Wesleyan Methodists in 1907 and formed the United Methodist Church. In 1932, the United Methodist Church and the Primitive Methodist Connexion rejoined the Wesleyan Methodist Church to form The Methodist Church. Other descendants included the Whitfieldians in the eighteenth century whose members either rejoined the Wesleyans, became the Independents, or the Welsh Calvanistic Methodists. In 1806 the Unitarian Methodists broke from the Wesleyan Methodists. In 1872, The Salvation Army was formed from the Methodist New Connexion. This chronology was based on a combination of Palgrave-Moore, *Understanding*, p. 12; Hempton, *Methodism*; Wearmouth, *Methodism*, and Townsend, Workman, Eayrs, *New History*, Vol. 1, Bk. 3, pp. 481-598.

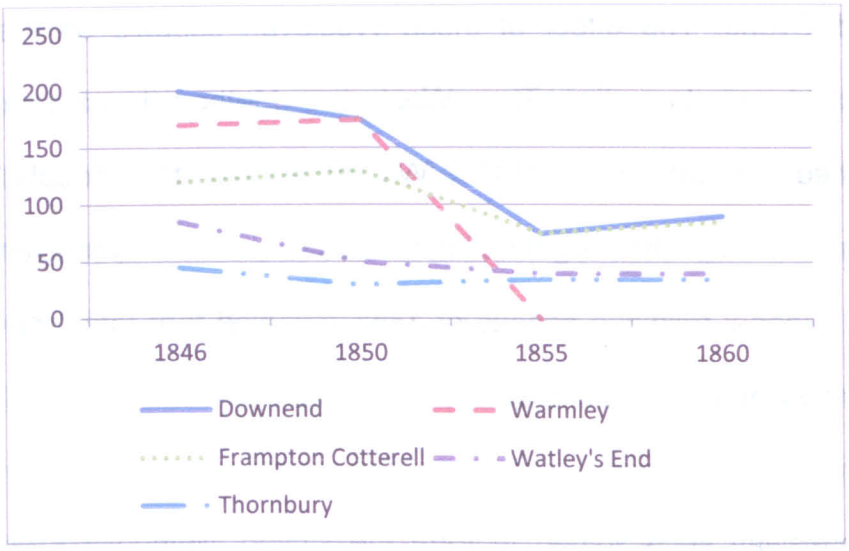

Figure 106: Membership at Wesleyan Methodist chapels during the schism, 1846-1860.

The most devastating blow fell at Warmley which reduced from 173 members to seven.[64] George Ollis, from the hatters' strike in Oldland Common in 1829, was a leader of the Free Methodists here. In 1843, he was elected to assistant overseer of the poor for Bitton with an annual salary of £18, a position he held until he died in 1874.[65] In 1858, Ollis was one of the first trustees with other hatters of Warmley Tower United Free Methodist Chapel and later became a preacher.[66] Membership of Downend more than halved in two years and, in 1854, the Downend Circuit was restyled as 'Downend and Winterbourne' with staff reduced to one minister 'who shall reside at Winterbourne'.[67]

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[64] Spittal, 'Free Churches', p. 21; Edwards, *County Circuit*, pp. 6-7.
[65] Ollis's formal agreement bound him to Job Lapham and Thomas Heaven, the overseers, in trust for £400. He was to pay his collected monies every seven days to the Board of Guardians of the Keynsham Union with an account in writing. Sureties for his employment were given by James Brain and John Mitchell (BRO, P/B/OP/5).
[66] Ollis was a trustee along with twenty-one others, including two local hatters, Edmond Davis and James Scull. The land for the chapel was bought from Alfred Davidson of Warmley House for £34 and sold to the trustees by Stephen Cooper Ollis, tailor of Court Lane, Oldland Common (1861 census; website of the Unity Oldland Methodist Church, now thought closed, accessed 2007).
[67] *Hebron Methodist Church, High Street, Staple Hill, Bristol, Centenary Year 1973-1974* (Bristol, Partridge and Love 1974), p. 1.

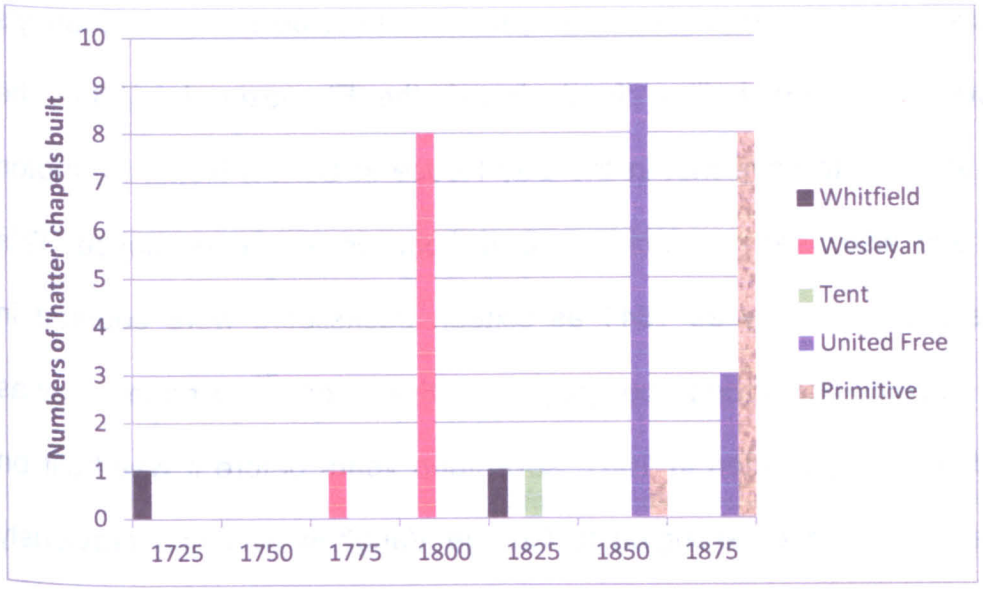

Figure 107: Thirty-three Methodist chapels in the hatting villages by quarter century of build.

When the building of the United Methodist Free Churches is added, forty-five non-conformist chapels are found in the hatting villages in South Gloucestershire to 1900, thirty-three of them in areas of hatter concentration and involvement.[68] The groupings by Methodist sect at the time of build, and the date of build, are shown on the figure.[69] Some of the dating and construction information is contradictory, some non-existent. Many chapels were later added to, rebuilt, or changed affiliation as a result of mergers. Finance was also a major issue for these early Methodist people as they sought to maintain their support of the travelling preachers and to meet the debts on their buildings. 'In the vast majority of cases, chapels were cleared of debt only after long periods'.[70]

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[68] There were other chapels of other denominations in these areas.
[69] Appendix 69: *Methodist chapels in the hatting villages, 1741-1900.*
[70] Edwards, *Country Circuit*, p. 4.

The effects of the split from the Wesleyans can best be shown in Watley's End where the hatters built a 'free' chapel, the Ebenezer, in 1868. The founders are said to have met in the Day House in School Road, Frampton Cotterell, and also used 137 Watley's End Road as a meeting house. This may have been as early as 1841 as sixteen *backsliders* were counted in Salem's seventy-one-strong congregation that year.[71] Ebenezer was registered by George Luton in 1851, seventeen years before it was built on twenty perches of land belonging to George Vaughan who had previously backed the purchase of the Frampton Cotterell chapel from the Tent Methodists.[72] Salem was head of the Kingswood Circuit for ten years following the collapse at Downend, but the Ebenezer so weakened its membership that Thornbury assumed leadership of the circuit and the minister's manse was moved there in 1868.[73] In 1884, the trustees of the Ebenezer included hatters Ambrose Maggs, who lived next door to the chapel; George Lewton (sic), who saw the work through; William Rodman; Charles Garlick; and George Edwards.[74]

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[71] Eaves and Johnston, *Salem*, pp. 19-20.
[72] 8/2/1851, George Dutton's collection (GA, D2052/1). The land ran in a strip on the edge of Vaughans' property and was sold for £15 in 1867 to a consortium of Frampton Cotterell and Watley's End Methodists (Veronica Smith, Jeffrey Spittal, Sydney Marks & Derek Andrews, compiled, *Around Frampton Cotterell and Winterbourne*, Stroud, Tempus 2000), p. 68; Records of the Ebenezer's executors (Methodist Studies Unit, Oxford). 'It was believed of many mill owners that they kept a special fund from the fines raised from their workers and they used it for charitable or chapel-building purposes' (Thompson, *Working Class*), fn. 1, p. 382. Despite affirming to legal documents, George Vaughan was buried in an austere family vault at Highgate Cemetery. Previous Vaughan generations are buried at Christ Church in Southwark where the most imposing of the memorials is the family's large altar tomb, carved with detailed family genealogy.
[73] *Hebron Methodist*, p. 1; Hearle, 'Frome Valley', p. 16.
[74] BRO, 35230; H W N Ludwell, *Ebenezer Church, Watley's End, 1868-1968, pamphlet: 100 Glorious Years*, June 1968. George Lewton was also the 1871 Watley's End census administrator (1871 census).

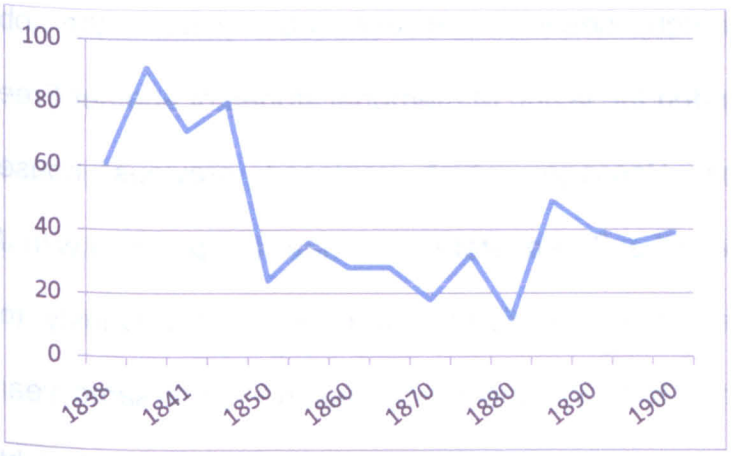

Figure 108: Membership and schism at Watley's End Wesleyan Chapel, 1838-1900.

Charles Garlick provides an excellent example of Methodist commitment. His father George Garlick was born in Westerleigh, did his early hatting in Frampton Cotterell, and moved around 1817 across the River Frome to Watley's End.[75] Charles was apprenticed to the Simmonds factory in Watley's End with his £6 premium paid by the trustees of a fund set up by Miller Christy, the Quaker founder of the Christy hat manufacturing firm.[76] Charles set up at 85 Castle Street in Bristol in 1846 to great success.[77] He was frequently, often weekly, in the city newspapers with reports of his principal interests: Methodism, charitable giving, improved city infrastructure and Liberal politics. When the corner stone of the new chapel at Russell Town, Barton Hill, was commemorated, Charles sold tickets from his shop for the tea afterwards at Trinity Road Chapel, Newtown.[78] When his own chapel, Milk

[75] 16/4/1788, baptised, Westerleigh (B&AFHS, 1a/70/27/2/33).
[76] BRO, P.W/OP/15/220.
[77] *Ports of the Bristol Channel*, p. 215. There was a separate prominent Garlick family in Bristol with interests in pharmacy, sugar, iron, distilleries and linen drapery. Edward Garlick, c. 1778-1840, the participant in many of these businesses lived in Castle Street from 1704-1740 (I V Hall, 'The Garlicks, Two Generations of a Bristol Family, 1692-1781', TBGAS, Vol. 80, 1961), pp. 132-159.
[78] *BM*, 3/10/1868.

Street Methodist Free Church, needed a sexton, he collected the job applications.[79] Charles attended the laying of memorial stones of another Free Methodist chapel at New Passage, which replaced previous house meetings.[80] By 1878, he was of sufficient stature to share the platform with J Storrs Fry, of the chocolate firm and relative by marriage of Miller Christy, to hear a lecture at the Young Men's Christian Association.[81] That same year Charles travelled from Bristol to Winterbourne Down for the laying of eight memorial stones at the new United Free Methodist Chapel.[82] He became a superintendent of the Milk Street School and, by 1881, a member of the finance committee at the annual assembly of the United Methodist Free Churches.[83] Charles was also a trustee of the Tockington Chapel, securing £50 for a reconveyance, and attended the chapel opening.[84]

The link between Methodism and the hatters of South Gloucestershire is firmly made. Wherever the hatters established a large community, there was also a Wesleyan chapel and, after the Free Church schism, more than one chapel, together often exceeding the most optimistic expectations of likely congregations. There is enough evidence to suggest that in terms of leadership, financial commitment, and attendance, the hatters, alongside the colliers, could claim to have been Methodism's backbone in the country districts. There were other successful, occasional denominations in the hatter

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[79] *BM*, 11/7/1874.
[80] *BM*, 12/11/1878.
[81] *BM*, 29/10/1878.
[82] *BM*, 25/6/1878.
[83] *BM*, 8/10/1878, 28/7/1881.
[84] 4/3/1886, Mortgage (BRO, 41062/To/2). *BM*, 25/3/1886.

villages, notably Baptists, Congregationalists, and Moravians, but none of these sects can claim a depth of involvement to match that of wider Methodism with its extended contact with one concentrated industry. The established church through its baptisms, marriages and burials, continued its hold, but there was a notable falling away with the establishment of Methodist ceremonies and graveyards. The parishes of St Peter, Frampton Cotterell; St Anne, Oldland Common; and St Michael, Winterbourne can justly claim to have been the hatters' churches of the seventeenth and eighteenth century but, in the nineteenth, their place was taken by the Methodist chapels.[85] Nowhere was this more so than in Watley's End where there was little housing before the encroachment of the 1770s. Shortly afterwards, the hatters built the first Wesleyan chapel in the Bristol hinterland there. The hamlet is as near to a microcosm as can be found. Can the 'godly' in Watley's End be counted?

Figure 109: Watley's End: Age distribution by sex and occupation, 1841.

[85] John Bowes, *St Anne's Church: A Brief History of Oldland* (Private 1980). Moore, *Winterbourne*, pp. 7-26.

In 1841, there were 137 households in Watley's End, 663 people, an average of 4.8 individuals per home.[86] Only eight cottages held ten or more people. The sex / age distributions closely mirror each other and, taken with the low cottage occupancy, show Watley's End to be a close and supportive family hamlet, populated principally by married couples who cared for stay-at-home children and grandchildren, dependent sisters, and aged parents. In ninety-four of the households (69%), the principal wage earner was a hatter; 121 men were in the hatting trade, 67% of all males at work.[87]

The average ages for all 341 males and all 322 females were 26.3 and 26.2 years, but this hides a dip among the number of both sexes resident who were aged between twenty and thirty years.[88] Watley's End in 1841 was an unusual one-occupation community beginning its decline in hatting. The average age of the hatters was 44.9 years. Men over thirty-five years were almost exclusively hatters, the younger the man under thirty-five the less likely he was to be a hatter.[89] The majority of young men who did not find work in the trade became agricultural or general labourers (14.4% of employment) or left

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[86] 1841 census.

[87] Ten households had an unemployed woman as the principal occupant, with no indication of widower status, or an absent male wage earner. Some of these householders were hatter in origin, like Hannah Simmonds whose husband Charles, was a hat manufacturer and away from home. Some of the men, if still alive, could have been on the tramp. If these homes are excluded, the households where the principal wage earner was a hatter rises to 74%.

[88] A straightforward division of total age by inhabitants gives an average age for males of 25.5 years and for females of 25.4 years. However, in the 1841 census, enumerators (in Watley's End this was hatter Joseph Hollister) were instructed to round ages of those over fifteen, downwards to the next multiple of five. This was not always done. Eighty percent of the ages quoted at exactly 15, 20, 25, 30, etc, were increased by 2.5 years to compensate (Eve McLaughlin, *The Censuses 1841-1881, Their Use and Interpretation*, Birmingham, The Federation of Family Histories, fourth edition 1990), p. 2.

[89] There were still, or only, seven apprentice hatters, all sons to hatter fathers; the youngest trainee was fourteen years old.

the village. The imminent post-inclosure collapse in farming meant that the field work option would soon disappear.[90] Twenty men had no occupation or stated income source.[91] Women either worked at home or also left to find employment or marriage; only seven females (4% of the available workforce), with an average age of 17.4 years, had paid work, all servants. This was an ageing population, independent, probably more conservative than nearby villages, and recently battered by the loss of the trade in felt hats to the American plantations and by the strikes at Vaughan's and Christy's in 1834-1835. The deleterious effects of London's new silk hat trade were beginning to be realised.

Among the population aged fifteen and over, 379 people (196 male, 183 female) was the maximum available for chapel services; 166 children between five and fifteen (81 boys, 85 girls) for Sunday Bible classes. The capacity of the Salem chapel was 291 worshippers.[92] In 1839, the Winterbourne Society membership was ninety-one people; in 1841 it had fallen to seventy-one with the sixteen backsliders, who left to form the core of the United Free Church. In 1843-1844, out of twenty-four Wesleyan chapels, this was the only one that sometimes needed three Sunday services to cope with hatting families like

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[90] Chapter 11: *Decline, 1800-1909.*

[91] 10.5% of the available workforce was between fifteen and sixty-nine. The real figure could well be higher after allowing for the traditional seasonal work of the hatters, although the census was taken in March, the peak manufacturing season. Throughout censuses, when hatters gave their occupation, it did not necessarily confirm that they were in work.

[92] Increased to 350 by 1911 (Methodist Studies Unit, Oxford Brookes University, *Returns of Accommodation: Wesleyan Methodist Chapels*). Ebenezer opened with a capacity of 144 with a single schoolroom holding seventy children.

Curtis, Flook, Francombe, Maggs, Powell and Woodruffe.[93] In 1844, membership peaked at ninety-eight.[94] In 1851, deep in schism, Salem held Sunday service morning and evening with attendances of 140 and 180, with two Sunday Bible classes, morning and afternoon, each with ninety children.[95] Of course, these may have been people attending chapel twice each Sunday.

Historians conventionally multiply Methodist membership figures by between three and five to estimate adherents.[96] Field in 1994 adjusted this multiple to between two and six times with a median of three or four times, giving an estimated congregation at Salem of 318 (using ninety-one and 3.5).[97] Allowing for a degree of sickness, lethargy, and absence, a working assumption for Sunday congregations at Salem in 1841, could be the actual population of 379 people; in other words, every man and woman over fifteen years in Watley's End. In 1841, 166 children between five and fifteen were available for bible class; by 1851, 180 attended.

The comprehensiveness of Methodist attendance at Watley's End should not be extended automatically to the wider hatter community. Around Oldland Common in 1831, for instance, hatters were 52% of the employed male

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[93] Eaves, Johnston, *Salem*, pp. 22, 28-31.
[94] Eaves, Johnston, *Salem*, pp. 18-19. 'Methodist statistics are particularly reliable. Wesleyanism and its offshoots produced some of the earliest and most painstaking collectors of social statistics in Britain' (Gilbert, *Religion and Society*), p. 30.
[95] *Ecclesiastical Census Returns, 1851* (TNA, HO 129/331-332).
[96] In 1908, there were 8.7 million Methodist church members worldwide, and around 35 million worshippers (Townsend, Workman, Eayrs, *New History*), Vol.1, pp. 280-281, insert, Vol.2, p. 533.
[97] Field, 'Membership Analysis', p. 153. He cites seven authorities.

workforce.[98] In Winterbourne itself, and in Frampton Cotterell and Oldland Common, the hatter concentrations, while still a majority in the immediate vicinity were more integrated into the wider mining and farming community. With a South Gloucestershire village hatter population in 1841 of 685, a presumption of 2,500-3,000 attending Methodists from hatter families seems plausible.[99]

There is no evident way of assessing how many or how much of the outward signs of Methodism these worshippers exhibited, but with a Wesleyan attendance in Watley's End of between 318 in 1839 and upwards of 180 in 1851, this latter after the schism, considerable peer pressure can be imagined. Thompson saw Methodism's 'greatest success in serving simultaneously as the religion of the industrial bourgeoisie (although here it shared the field with other non-conformist sects) and of wide sections of the proletariat. Nor can there be any doubt as to the deep-rooted allegiance of many working-class communities (equally among miners, weavers, factory

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[98] Appendix 53: *Hatters in the Bitton census, 1831.*

[99] Average hatter's family in Watley's End in 1841 excluding under five-year-olds equals 4.95. Total hatter population in South Gloucestershire at 100% chapel attendance equals 4.95 x 685 equals 3,390 (1841 census). Halévy put Wesleyan Methodist membership in England in 1811 at 231,000 (English People), p. 415. Also in 1811, the Dissenters estimated themselves at only two million out of a population of ten million. In 1812, in an official enquiry into parishes of over one thousand inhabitants, the number of non-conformist chapels considerably exceeded the number of Anglican churches, being 3,438 as against 2,533. On the evidence, while the nominal members of the Establishment still constituted an enormous majority, the non-conformists already equalled, if they did not exceed, the Anglicans who practised their religion', Halévy, p. 428, citing Resolutions adopted at a meeting of non-conformists, 15/5/1811 (*Political Register*, 22/5/1811), Vol. xix, p. 1624, and *Abstract of the Total Number of Parishes in each Diocese of England and Wales*, containing a Population of 1,000 Persons and upwards, 20/5/1812.

workers, seamen, potters and rural labourers) to the Methodist Church'.[100] Hatters can now be added to Thompson's list.

Methodism was always a 'defined conviction'. Thompson, with a frustration borne of personal experience, listed some desired differences: marriage from within the societies; distinguishing dress; gravity of speech and manners; and the avoidance of relatives who were still in Satan's Kingdom. Aspiration was backed by harsh discipline. 'Members were expelled for levity, for profanity and swearing, for lax attendance at class meetings'.[101] Southey recalled a 'spiritual police' constantly alert for any sign of relapse.[102] Early preachers conducted 'passionate attempts to impose a degree of religious discipline amidst the psychological disturbance, sexual repression, and immediate providentialism that wafted around early Methodist spirituality. Both men and women felt anxiety, shed tears, prayed fervently, saw visions, encountered scoffers'.[103] Edmund Gibson asked whether the traditional Anglican emphasis on 'regular attendance on the publick offices of religion' was not a 'better evidence of the co-operation of the Holy Spirit than those sudden Agonies, Roarings and Screamings, Tremblings, Droppings-down, Ravings and Madness into which the [Methodist] Hearers have been cast'.[104]

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[100] Thompson, *Working Class*, p. 391. Thompson's Marxist view of Methodism may need some qualification.
[101] Thompson, *Working Class*, p. 42; Morgan, *Wesley in Bristol*, p. 15.
[102] R Southey, *Life of Wesley and the Rise and Progress of Methodism* (London, Warne 1890), pp. 382, 545. In one purge in Bristol in 1748 Wesley reduced membership from 900 to 730 in a week-long examination of the whole society (Morgan, *Wesley in Bristol*), p. 16.
[103] Hempton, *Empire*, p. 16.
[104] Edmund Gibson, *Observations Upon the Conduct and Behaviour of a Certain Sect Usually Distinguished by the Name of Methodists* (1744), cited in Hempton, *Empire*, p. 33.

Southey also noted that Methodists inherited from Wesley the conviction that children were sinful and this approach may have been carried into the Watley's End Sunday classes:

> Whatever pains it costs, break the will if you would not damn the child. Let a child from a year old be taught to fear the rod and to cry softly; from that age make him do as he is bid, if you whip him ten times running to effect it ... Break his will now, and his soul shall live, and he will probably bless you to all eternity.[105]

Methodist preachers taught their flocks that they were 'precious in the sight of God' and that they had a soul to 'save and maintain equally with the richest in the land'. With the establishment of a powerful chapel in a small community, a village could never be the same again. 'Short-term as well as long-term results were bound to follow'.[106]

Hatters always looked to their own interests and to the maintenance of community through Friendly Societies. Their trade union motto from early times was 'We help each other in time of need' and this was applied to the Winterbourne tramping blanks by the beginning of the nineteenth century. In this, they were no different to the mass of Methodist adherents. 'Many thousands now living in the manufacturing towns,' declared a pamphleteer, 'before they heard the Methodists ... were supplied by their parishes', but after coming under the influence of the movement they 'acquired self-respect that

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[105] Southey, *Life of Wesley*, Vol. 2, p. 235.
[106] Wearmouth, *Working-Class*, p. 216.

made them repel the very suggestion of public aid'.[107] In Manchester, 'the constant attenders in this new model of worship are more industrious in their trade and other occupations, and maintain their families better than ever they did before'.[108] When the work was fast disappearing and the time came for the young people, and the early families, to move away from the hatting villages like Watley's End, many of those who chose the Colonies reached out to the Methodist communities there for help in establishing new lives.

For those who remained, 'demon drink' remained ever present. An itinerant hatter visited the trade turnhouse in Watley's End in 1830 and found a 'free jollification' as the host had married that day. 'Among the frolics of the evening was that of a half-witted fellow who was made to run the gauntlet of all the men in the house while in a state of nudity, and rudely indelicate as the affair was, he evidently enjoyed it'.[109]

In 1861, the Reform Movement held a meeting at 'Mr Flook's clubroom in Watley's End'. As well as out-of-town speakers, the meeting also heard from local [hatters], Messrs Luton, Maggs, Hollister, & others, of Winterbourne.[110] Many other hatter-run public houses in the villages can be added, among them

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[107] Matthew Lumb, *A Few Animadversions, upon a Pamphlet, entitled 'An Earnest and Affectionate Address to the People called Methodists'* (Skepton 1804), p. 48. Richard Chew, *James Everett: A Biography* (1875), p. 9. Also cited in Warner, *Movement*, p. 167.

[108] James Everett, *Wesleyan Methodism in Manchester and its Vicinity* (1827), Vol. I, p. 169, cited in Warner, *Movement*, p. 169.

[109] 1841-1891 censuses. *HG*, 'Reminiscences', 1889.

[110] *BM*, 26/10/1861. Contrast with Rule's 'growing sense that in communities where Methodism was strongly entrenched, revivalism was essentially the manifestation of a community dynamic, to which radical politics were largely irrelevant' (John Rule, 'Explaining Revivalism: The Case of Cornish Methodism', *Cornish Cases, Essays in Eighteenth Century Social History*, Southampton, Clio 2006), p. 139.

the *Rising Sun*, Howes, Frampton Cotterell; *The George and Dragon*, Maggs, Winterbourne; *Queen's Head Inn*, Burgess, Willsbridge; and *The Crown and Horseshoe Inn*, Quarman, Oldland Common.[111] In surely a hoax, perhaps based in reality, *Punch* magazine reported divers petitions against the sale of intoxicating liquors on Sunday being presented to the House of Commons from 'sundry places, one such came from Mr G Langton, Congregation of Free Methodists of Milk Street Chapel, Bristol, and the inhabitants of Oldland Common, Gloucestershire'. The reply from Lord Curzon indicated that the inhabitants of Oldland Common were 'evidently fit to be stuffed with sage and onions'.[112]

The temperance conflict among the hatters was never resolved. In the period surrounding the 1914-1918 war, Watley's End was known to Winterbourne inhabitants as 'Sodom', to reflect its rowdy behaviour.[113] It reflected in part the same dilemma among the Methodists. Wesley 'upbraided drunkards, tale-bearers and evil-speakers, and singled out indolence, lack of self denial and neglect of private prayer as slack behaviour' that required discipline, without which 'little good can be done among the Methodists'.[114] While there was a 'growing sentiment among Methodists in favour of total abstinence from intoxicants', the *Methodist New Connexion Magazine* of 1799 lengthily

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[111] These two occupations were often combined to provide off-season income. After George Maggs, landlord of the *George & Dragon*, died his wife seized her opportunity and shortened the pub's name to the *George* (Private, 2007).
[112] *Punch*, 16/5/1863. The hat manufacturers of Bristol at that time included Henry Sage, Charles Garlick and Daniel Parsley.
[113] Private, 2008.
[114] Morgan, *Wesley in Bristol*, p. 15.

instructed its readers in the art of brewing porter. The Wesleyan Conference of 1838 'bewailed the sin of intemperance'; but that of 1841 closed the chapel against teetotal meetings.[115] Even though the chapel was often 'substituted for the alehouse as the integrator of interest', the manufacturers 'felt the brunt of the ubiquitous alehouse and its sotted regiments'. The universal complaint was of an inability to depend on workers, who could not be found when wanted or trusted with responsibility when at work.[116]

A further dilemma for the hatters came with the abolition of slave trafficking in 1807, and of slave owning in the West Indies in 1838. The latter act, and by far the more important in manufacturing terms, could not have had a worse timing for the village hatters. Wesley made his position very clear in *Thoughts Upon Slavery*: the trade was 'against the plain law of nature and reason'; slave islands would be better 'sunk in the depth of the sea, than that they should be cultivated at so high a price as the violation of justice, mercy and truth'; 'Liberty is the right of every human creature.'[117] And, yet, Whitefield was a slave owner. At his death he bequeathed his fifty slaves to the Countess of Huntingdon. She bought still more and subsequently complained bitterly that her Georgia overseer had 'driven forty-one of the best of them to Boston and

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[115] Townsend, Workman, Eayrs, *New History*, Vol. 1, pp. 528-529.
[116] Thompson, *Working Class*, p. 393; Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1930, reprint London, Allen and Unwin 1987), pp. 54, 60-67, 160-161, 282; Samuel Smiles, *Lives of the Engineers*, Vol. iv (London, Murray 1879), pp. 226-227; John Lord, *Capital and Steam Power, 1750-1800* (1923, reprint Nabu Press 2011); Warner, *Movement*, p. 170.
[117] John Wesley, 'Thoughts Upon Slavery' in *Works*, Vol. xi (1774), p. 71, cited in David Hempton, *The Religion of the People, Methodism and popular religion c. 1750-1900* (London, Routledge 1996), p. 80.

sold them'.[118] George Ollis of Oldland Common was coerced with five other men by their master, Thomas Dale, to vote for the Tories in the 1832-1833 parliamentary election. The men refused and were dismissed in what became known as 'The Case of the Oldland Hatters'.[119] Ollis said he was pledged for the Whig candidates 'because they are friends to reform, the cause of people, and principally that they are for the abolition of slavery'.

Finally, there is the question of workforce radicalisation. Hempton saw Methodism as a 'movement of discipline and sobriety, but also of ecstasy and enthusiasm. It was a voluntary association of free people, but also specialized in rules, regulations, and books of discipline. It railed against riches, but became inexorably associated with steady accumulation of wealth'.[120]

Wesley repeatedly declared that his only concern was the saving of souls although he spoke readily on business conduct and relations. If the later preachers of his movement in the hatter villages were listening there was a clear message: 'Gain all you can. A persistent industriousness is the mark of social character ... The beneficence of both money and the process of getting it, stamps economic pursuits with divine sanction ... Am I resolved this day to

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[118] Townsend, Workman, Eayrs, *New History*, Vol. 1, p. 175. For the ambiguous attitude of the American Methodists in the 1830-140s, Vol. 1, pp. 126-127, 399.

[119] *BM*, 19/1/1833 - 6/4/1833. Also number of villages petitioning against slavery: 1/8/1814, Correspondence of Lord Castlereagh, Vol, x, p. 73; Halévy, *English People*, p. 459. Bristol Methodists celebration at abolition (*BM*, 26/7/1834).

[120] David Hempton, *Methodism, Empire of the Spirit* (Yale University Press 2005), p. 7. Although Grassby thought that because Methodists were 'concentrated in the lower echelons of society they lacked the funds to make a go of things, even if they had wanted to. Thresholds of entry may have been low by modern standards, but they were high enough for the bulk of the population' (Grassby, *Kinship*), p. 15.

be diligent in the business of my calling?'. The penalty for irregular business practices was summary excommunication. 'I gave a fair hearing to two of our brethren who had proved bankrupts. Such we immediately exclude from our society, unless it plainly appears not to be their own fault'.[121]

The alternative view, as so often, comes from Thompson and Southey.[122] Thompson felt the labourer must be 'turned into his own slave driver'.[123] In 1820, Southey wrote 'perhaps the manner in which Methodism has familiarised the lower classes to the work of combining in associations, making rules for their own governance, raising funds, and communicating from one part of the kingdom to another, may be reckoned among the incidental evils which have resulted from it'.[124] On the one hand, it was immoral for workers to seek pay rises 'merely because they possessed the power to force an increase'. However, the labourer had a right to claim enough to live, not on a mere subsistence level, but sufficient for an active if frugal life.[125] On the other hand, workers were instructed to rebuke their masters for the 'sake of the latter's spiritual welfare'; there could be 'no excuse for despising them, though they should be poor, mean, weak or aged'. Masters were told to look upon their servants 'as a kind of secondary children'.[126] Hat manufacturers in the 1830s were more preoccupied with

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[121] Warner, *Movement*, pp. 139-140, 143, 146; Wesley, *Works*, Vol. viii, p. 345; Luke Tyerman, *The Life and Times of the Rev John Wesley, MA, Founder of the Methodists* (New York, Harper, 1872), Vol. ii, p. 580.
[122] Also, Pollard, *Genesis*, p. 230.
[123] Thompson, *Working Class*, p. 393.
[124] Southey, *Life of Wesley*.
[125] Wesley, *Works*, Vol. xii, p. 301; cited in Warner, *Movement*, p. 149.
[126] Wesley, *Works*, Vol. iv, p. 228, Vol. vii, p. 79, cited in Warner, *Movement*, p. 148.

things other than the 'administration of men': 'the human mood of their workforce was not yet felt to be a problem'.[127]

Conclusions

From within, the hatters' tight communities exhibited considerable strength, bolstered by social systems based on family, combination, religion and self-help. The freedom from manorial and church control, and the availability of housing land near to the early markets in Bristol, gave them the space to develop this independence. Their 'peculiar righteousness' reached deep into their families, community, and their workplace.

From without, the hatters appeared as pockets of truculence dotted around a rural landscape. Craft pride was furthered by the men's endorsement *en bloc* of a not-always-disciplined non-conformism.[128] They struggled with their support for the slave trade, but supplied the ships with felt hats well after the building of their first chapels. Love of alcohol continued beyond the constraints called for by Wesley. 'The authority of the master was due simply to a function entrusted to him, and not to any inherent superiority over other men.'[129] In turn, their trade union exhibited a 'righteous confidence'. The hatters borrowed from their Methodism what they needed and managed the residue within their families and workplaces.

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[127] Pollard, *Genesis*, p. 230; David Riesman with Nathan Glazer and Reuel Denney, *The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character* (Yale University Press 1961).
[128] Thompson, *Working Class*, pp. 391-392.
[129] Wesley, *Works*, Vol. iv, p. 228, Vol. vii, p. 79. Warner, *Movement*, p. 148.

11 Decline, 1800-1909

Any disappearance of a regional powerhouse deserves an investigation, but the broad subject is unfashionable and lacks a strong comparative historiography. Patchy decline in the regional hat industry was evident from the beginning of the nineteenth century. The great family firms in Bristol retrenched or faded away. In the villages, never prosperous, the decline in employment in hatting was steep; it fell from strength to nothing within fifty years. Rising unemployment from the 1840s changed a way of life.

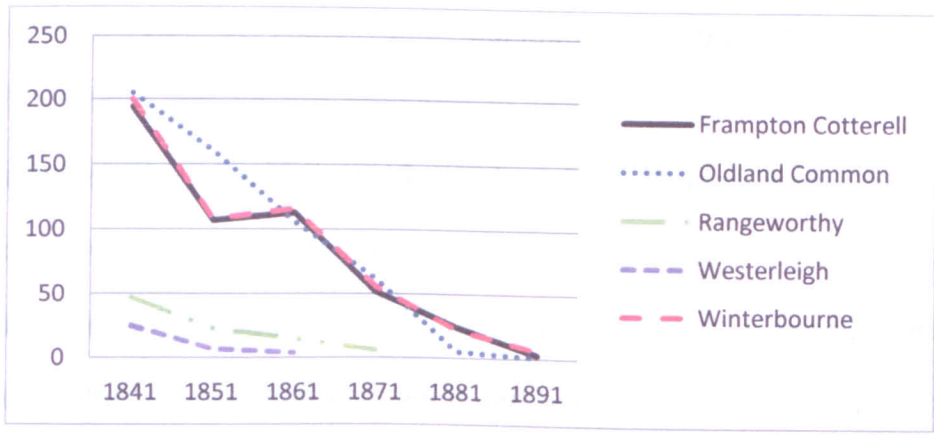

Figure 110: Village hatter employment, 1841-1900.[1]

The census returns hide a worse truth as the low numbers in the trade after 1870 mainly comprised life-long hatters, usually over sixty years of age, who were out-of-work, but at census automatically gave their occupation as 'hatter'. This rapid dwindling and ageing of the hatter population in Winterbourne is demonstrated through the percentage of baptisms recorded to them at chapel and church.

[1] Censuses, 1841-1901.

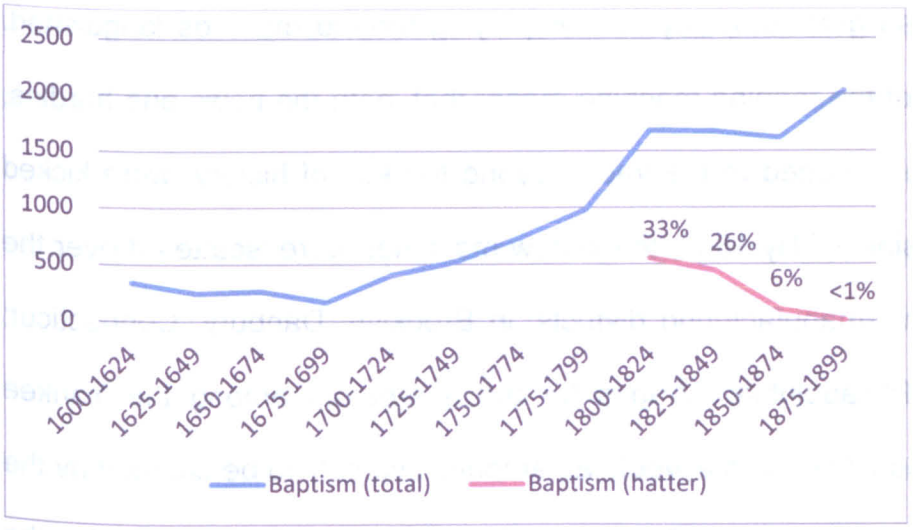

Figure 111: Baptisms to hatters in Winterbourne each quarter century, 1800-1899.

Even as Bristol lost its small slave barter business towards 1807 and, in the 1820s and 1830s, its trade with the slave plantations, the city was also losing its much larger regular trade to the whole of the New World. As the new cities of North America grew in power, industrial independence across all products came closer. The new American hat factories shook off the remnants of the 1732 act banning domestic hat manufacture and undercut the English trade. The confidence, hunger and speed of adaptation of the Americans quickly outstripped the staid English firms. For example, a new type of soft felt with only a little stiffening in the brim was introduced in 1852 and 'revolutionised the whole trade of the [United States] by producing an entire change in both the form and character of the hat'.[2] This was the forerunner of the hat brought back to England by the American cinema.

[2] J D Burn, *Three Years among The Working-Classes of The United States during the War* (London, Smith, Elder 1865), p. 182.

Demand was so great that any firm employing the old methods languished. The invention of the forming machine meant that 'both the bows and hurdles, which had been wedded to the trade beyond the ken of history, were kicked about their business.' By 1860, these new machines were 'scattered over the whole of the hat-manufacturing districts' in Brooklyn; Danbury, Connecticut; Newark; and Philadelphia.[3] Wages for the 'fire-eaters among the Yankee hatters' reached fifty dollars a week, an amount 'scarcely to be credited by the old journeymen in England'. This was all opportunity lost not just for the feltmakers in Bristol but for the entire country.

Amidst the disappearance of overseas business and the slump in post-Napoleonic trade, the arrival of the Londoner hat manufacturers initially brought steady work and new markets to the villages. For example, they brought with them, in 1820, the *plated* hat, in which wool bodies were covered with the furs of rabbits and hares. The skins were abundant in the regional warrens and the invention benefitted the South Gloucestershire hatters. Hats made in this way were good imitations of what was then styled the beaver hat, and could be had for less than one-half the price. 'At this period the wool hats covered the heads of nearly the whole of the industrious classes, but in the course of a short time the new *plated* hats completely superseded them.'[4]

For Wrigley, the tension between population and production could 'never be far from the surface of economic life, nor can the imminence of poverty and its

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[3] Burn, *Working-Classes*, p. 183.
[4] Burn, *Working-Classes*, p. 183.

attendant sufferings be evaded by a substantial part, often the bulk, of the population'.[5] Villages grew, but within a few years industrial unrest brought calamity to almost all of the London businesses in South Gloucestershire even as success seemed in reach. The break up was uneven, but rapid.

Oldland Common began its decline in 1829 when the hatters at Bicknell & Moore struck for pay and were incensed when non-union labour was introduced. Moore, who employed 1,000 men around London, wrote that he 'gradually gave up my other [hatting] establishments and was concentrating my business wholly upon the Common where I already employed nearly one half of the men and might have taken on two-thirds of them'.[6] In 1832 in Bitton, there was cholera with an average twenty disbursements in poor relief made each day. In twelve months, almost 2,500 cases cost £1,081 0s 5½d, plus over £160 to the local doctor for medicine.[7] In Willsbridge, Mayhew & White left after a disastrous fire about 1833.[8] The same year, Bicknell & Moore finally sold their Oldland Common manufactory.

Surprisingly, just two Oldland Common hatters were recorded as imprisoned debtors between 1833-1844 and both were released under the more lenient terms of the new Georgian acts: John Smith, a journeyman hatter, in 1838;

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[5] E A Wrigley, *Poverty, Progress*, p. 4.
[6] *Ellacombe Papers*, Vol. 9, (BCL, 1833), p. 126.
[7] BRO, P.B/OP/2(f). In Stockport [the rising competitor to South Gloucestershire for hat work], in the year ending March 1833, the number of families who received parish relief was 651; and the amount distributed among them was £2,447. Of these sixty-five families were connected with factories, and the sum distributed among them was £297 (P Gaskell, *Artisans and Machinery: The Moral and Physical Condition of the Manufacturing Population*, London, Parker 1836; reprint London, Cass 1968), pp. 371-372.
[8] *BM*, 31/7/1847; Wells, *Time-Honoured Cheer*, p. 50.

and Luke Kethro, originally from Winterbourne, who ran a small hat factory and became a beer retailer.[9]

The southernmost part of the hatting district was now in terminal decline, but there was a short period of stability in the Frome valley. A travelling hatter visited Winterbourne in 1830 and saw that 'though business was not in a prosperous condition, the men were in a fair state of employment'.[10] However, the great strike in Frampton Cotterell and Watley's End against Christy and Vaughan in 1834-1835 reduced those local men to penury. Vaughan in Watley's End became disillusioned and said that he was 'doing nothing to his premises in Gloucestershire because he saw everything was going northward'.[11]

Almost immediately there were further blows. The beaver hat had reigned supreme from the seventeenth century and had 'become wedded both to the taste and ideas of *capt* comfort of the people'.[12] Journeymen 'flattered themselves' that the felt would hold its place against any new form of hat. However, the felt had its disadvantages; it was bulky, heavy and costly; even the imitation *plated* beaver could not be considered a cheap hat. The mass market saw the advent of a plethora of other hat and cap styles for the less

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[9] *Minutes of Proceedings in Cases of Insolvent Debtors*, under Acts of 5 George IV, c. 61 (1845), and 7 George IV, c. 57 (1847), 12/7/33-20/11/1844 (GA, Q/RID/2). *LG*, 25/2/1840. Luke Kethro occupied Robert Short's hat manufactory in 1832 (BRO, 15/12/1832, *Bitton poor rate assessment*).
[10] *HG*, 'State of the felt hat trade', 1886.
[11] Letter 26/9/1834 (CA, P/2/11).
[12] *HG*, 'State of the felt hat trade', 1886.

wealthy made from chipped wood, japanned materials, leather, straw, and resurgent hand-knitted wool now increasingly machine-woven. Increasing public wealth in the nineteenth century accelerated sudden shifts in fashions and the well-to-do flocked to buy an improved silk hat. The French brought out the hat in 1820 and a few of them were sent to England; 'even then these new head coverings were well got up in the make, shape and colour, but they did not take the taste of the people'. A few years later, silk hats were produced in England, but the bodies were hard and heavy and the silk plush had a long nap which no finishing could keep down and, as the silk was homemade, the 'colour was decidedly inferior to the French'. The Paris hat, invented by a Frenchman in 1825, and introduced about 1830, immediately established itself in the public favour. The new hat was made in London shops and within ten years enjoyed a period of unprecedented prosperity. The hat manufacturers made their silk plush with a short nap after the French style; the bodies of the hats were now much lighter and more 'easy to the head'. The modern silk hat at twelve shillings was 'superior in look and retained its colour long after half a dozen stuff hats had become brown'.

Country feltmakers suffered a 'period of depression and distress' between 1840-1850.[13] National wages fell by up to fifty percent as the silk hat took their most profitable market. Felt hatters suffered so severely that the period was known in the north, as in other trades, as *The Hungry Forties*. In 1842, a 'social revolutionary simoon' passed over Frampton Cotterell and

[13] *Report, Associated Society of the Journeymen Felt Hatters*, 1900, p. 95.

Winterbourne, and 'swept away both hats and hatters, wrecked the fortunes of the small dealers, and socially ruined many others who were interested in the stability of the hat trade'.[14] Work was scarce and conditions so bad that many of the small masters were compelled to close their shops; a large number of hatters left the trade altogether. Journeymen who were 'not too ripe in years had to learn a new business'. In his 1850 survey of the London poor, Mayhew noted the 'majority of London journeymen perhaps three-fourths of them, are country men, chiefly from Cornwall, Gloucestershire, and Lancashire, with a few Scotchmen, and a very few Irishmen':

> A great number of hats, principally of the cheaper sorts, used to be sent from the country to London when the substitution of silk hats for stuff put an end to the trade, or nearly so, as the country hat-makers were not sufficiently skilled in the new manufacture. Winterbourne and *Hollands* Common in Gloucestershire, and Oldham and its neighbouring villages in Lancashire, were places in which there very many large hat factories, the trade being now in those localities only a tenth of what it was. 'The stuff hands,' I was told by a hatter, himself acquainted with the Gloucestershire factories, 'went into silk, such as could work on silk and could get work; some emigrated; and some got a navy's work on the railways.[15]

The decline continued through the 1850s. The Morris manufactory at Watley's End was taken over for about five years by the Howes family.[16] In 1863, the Morris family auctioned the property and lived in London on their capital.[17] Hall's in Frampton Cotterell probably closed shortly after 1864. George

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[14] Mr H Whittaker, writing of conditions sixty years before (*HG*, 1910), p. 95.
[15] Mayhew, 'Labour and the Poor', pp. 149-150, 152. Hollands Common: Oldland Common.
[16] *BM*, 2/10/1847; *The Times*, 24/6/1863.
[17] *The Times*, 24/6/1863.

Maggs, a hat manufacturer from Watley's End, was twice gaoled for debt in Bristol. The first, in 1860, must have been a short-term affair as the next year saw him with ten employees and an apprentice at Watley's End.[18] At the end of the industry's time in the village, in 1869, he was found bankrupt.[19] After discharge, he lived with family until his death in Winterbourne's Perry Almshouses.[20] Winfield Christy visited his own declining outpost that year as a part of regular and formal management inspections. Among the many management bits and pieces in his hand-written notes is a record of a 'fine eight-man lead kettle at Hall's which had never been used' which he decided to try to buy.[21] George Vaughan also leased to local hatters and, at his death in 1876, the property was auctioned by brother Henry who used the money to further his art collection.[22]

All of this general collapse eventually left Christy's as the sole surviving major London firm in South Gloucestershire. An underlying, long-term deterioration in Christy's Frampton Cotterell employment followed the 1834 strike when, afterwards as the local men feared, production slowly moved to Stockport.[23] Over the next thirty-three years, there was a drop from 179 workers to thirty-eight (-79%), while employment in the firm nationally rose from 444 to 1,628 (+267%).[24]

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[18] LG, 13/3/1860. 1861 census.
[19] LG, 21/12/1869, 22/2/1870.
[20] Burial records, Winterbourne parish.
[21] CA, Frampton Cotterell inspection notes, Winfield Christy 20-21/5/1864.
[22] *The Times*, 1/4/1876.
[23] CA, 14/10/1834.
[24] Figures from an answer to queries from a lawyer, Monsieur Nerot, who acted for Christy's on a French trademark infringement (CA, B/P/4/24-25). By 1872, the year after the Frampton

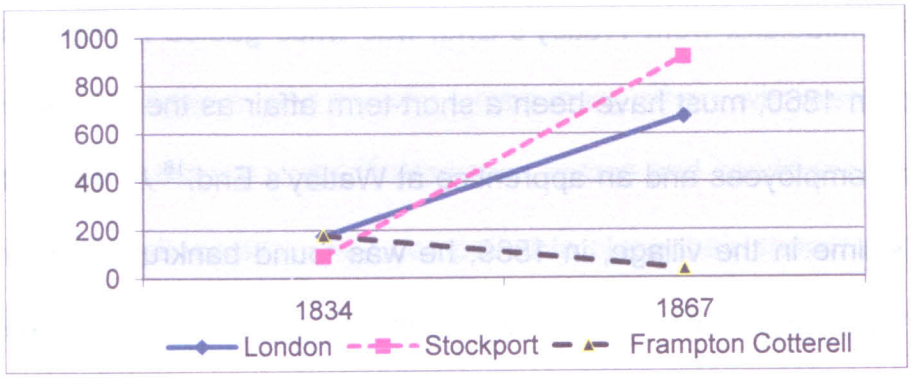

Figure 112: After the strike: The change in Christy's employment, 1834-1867.

In 1855, Frampton Cotterell was reduced to twenty-seven men, but there was some forgiveness in the air. One Christy partner wrote that the men were given unexpectedly 100 dozen Ormonds to make, block, finish, sandpaper and add the trimmings. Each dozen cost 16s 9d of which the men received 3d for each hat, 'poor work for the FC men'.[25] The work had been done well: 'I am going there for if more men are put to work more room must be had and this I hope can be done out of hand – two batterys.'

Increasingly, the next Christy generation, more capitalists than feltmakers, fretted at the constraints placed on improving machinery. It took the death in 1858 of William Miller Christy to break the deadlock. Stockport had by then become the firm's felt hatting centre, far outstripping Frampton Cotterell, its precursor and earlier superior. William Miller's second son, Henry, was dragged back into a business he had gleefully left in 1852 to devote himself to

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Cotterell closure, employment at Christy's Stockport premises reached 1,392: Canal Street 545, Houndsmill 606, Outdoors 169, Hazel Grove 71 (CA, B/VV/2/5).

[25] CA, Letter to Edmund Christy, 7/1/1855, unsigned.

his scientific interests.[26] Henry was noted for a tongue that could 'sting like nettles'.[27] In 1859, Henry left for a seven-week trip to America with William Barber, the firm's Stockport technical manager, and the pair paid $5,765 for much new machinery for installation at Stockport.[28] 'We had many difficulties in this introduction', said Barber, 'but we gradually surmounted them all. Entirely green hands were taught in most case for I found it preferable to get such than old hatters, and new machines had to be made as we extended'. Barber was extremely successful and, by 1862, production at Stockport for the new machines was 100 dozen a week; by 1863, 130 dozen. In 1868, Barber said that 'some weeks this year we have exceeded 1,800, and at a push with our present machinery we could turn out 2,000 dozen'.[29]

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[26] *Henry Christy's diary*, 27/7/1852: 'Completion of 42 years ... it has been short of what it should have been, there is hope that life has not been wholly in vain as regards the good of others ... The past year has been as regards prosperity most eventful. The step I took in retiring from Business, whilst it cuts off many influential associations - limits & narrows one's field of action & shears one of much power – is to myself in many ways so full of advantage that I have never once during the past seven months repented of the step (BMAOA archive, British Museum). For scientific achievement, see Jill Cook, Senior Curator of Archaeology of Human Origins, British Museum, 'In Pursuit of the Unity of the Human Race: the Life, Work and Collecting of Henry Christy (1810-1865)' given at *Turquoise, Henry Christy and museum collections: an interdisciplinary conference*, 11-13/12/2009, British Museum. *Comptes rendus*, 29/2/1864; Henry Christy, 'On the Prehistoric Cave-Dwellers of Southern France', *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London*, Vol. 3, 1865, pp. 362-372; first read to the Society 21/6/1864. Édouard Lartet (begun by Henry Christy), *Reliquiae Aquitanicae being contributions to the archaeology and palaeontology of Pèrigord and the adjoining provinces of Southern France* (London, Williams 1875). There is a plaque to Henry's memory in the Abris at Laugerie Basse at Les Eyzies, in which village he is still venerated as one of the founders of the prosperity and fame of the district.

[27] Barber, *Chronicles*, p. 12.

[28] A fur picker and former, a wool mixer, duster, two carding machines, a winder, a jigger, two planking machines, a sewing machine, and a machine for tearing up pairings; and four men to teach their use. None of the shopping lists for this trip agree exactly (CA, P/3/6, with many of the invoices in VV/2/35). Also, Turner, *First Shop*, p. 85.

[29] Barber, *Chronicles*, p. 25.

Figure 113: In 1845, William Henry Miller Christy, left, struck his son Henry, right, in a 'business argument and lost his last ally in the firm'. William was forced into retirement.[30]

In the midst of this debate on machinery, in August 1858, there was another strike across the whole district: Winterbourne, Frampton Cotterell, and *Oldland's* Common. The *Bristol Mercury*, while giving no reason for the walk out, opined that 'as the hat-making trade is the chief support of those villages, we hope that some speedy arrangement may be effected'.[31] Something was afoot across the trade for, a few weeks before in Stockport, the Felt Hat Body-Makers' Union wrote, again without explanation as to cause, that

> after having exhausted every mode of argument to induce [Christy's] to settle those disputes in an amicable manner – after deputations of workmen have waited upon these employers in order to reason together, and if possible to adjust the difference – after those deputations have been treated with contempt, and the spirit of overbearing intolerance too often evinced by the employers on such occasions has blighted the hopes and broken the spirits of the workmen – as a last resource to appeal to the public and thus to show that although they were vanquished in the unequal contest of overgrown capital against helpless poverty.[32]

In July, John Christy, perhaps still scarred by the events of 1834, wrote:

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[30] CA, *Partners' Memo Book*, 6/1845; Smith, *Hat Trades*, p. 173.
[31] *BM*, 14/8/1858.
[32] *Manchester Weekly News*, 5/6/1858.

> I think no thing is so desirable in beginning a contest with men as to avoid anything like a vindictive or retaliating feelings, but to endeavour to ask yourself this question, 'Have we done right by these people?' ... Gradually change your system by an antiphlogistic mode of treatment; every man who leaves us takes an idea with him for somebody else's benefit.[33] They gain all; we lose all.[34]

Looking back one hundred years later, John Christie-Miller blamed the demise of Frampton Cotterell on the rise of the silk hat, which was only made in small numbers in Oldland Common and in Bristol, and on a lengthy strike by the workpeople against the introduction of new fur-cutting machinery.[35] With so few workers left employed it would seem a most foolhardy action. Nonetheless, there was an element of recovery here for Frampton Cotterell and for Oldland Common. Two separate manufactories owned by the Jefferis family, at Oldland Common and Oldland Bottom, did struggle on, even adding limited machinery in the 1870s, but both were auctioned, one seriously in debt.[36] Pickford carriage records showed a strengthening trade at Frampton Cotterell: in 1862, 616 dozen felts arrived from Stockport for planking; in 1863, 2,282; 1864, 6,368; 1865, 6,956.[37] In 1863, Christy's accountant wrote to his masters that the accounts showed that the 'arrangements made by you when there appear to work well so I think by end of present quarter the expenses

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[33] Antiphlogistic: anti-inflammatory (*OED*).
[34] Letter by John Christy to Christy's at Stockport (CA, 5/7/1858).
[35] Christie-Miller, *Feltmakers*, p. 17. The silk hat was made in Oldland Common between 1870-1881 (Censuses).
[36] The mood changed in the 1870s, driven by competition. The last two Oldland hat manufactories, separately run by Reuben, on the Common, and nephew John Jefferis, by Siston Brook, were fitted with boilers, engines, and gearing and shafting, for hat shaping. Both were out of business within 10 years (*BM*, 25/7/1878, 14/5/1881).
[37] CA, B/P/4/30.

will compare favourably with previous years'.[38] The cause was a revival in the fashion for beaver hats when the 'manufacturers had to search the workhouses and almshouses for old hatters, and called once again to the bench the feeble hands'.[39] This revival of the ruffed hat was confined to the ladies' trade.[40]

By this time, the decision to close was already made. In December 1869 the partners' Private Memorandum Book recorded that 'the place shd. be repaired & the business carried on there for another year'.[41] Christy's extended the life of Frampton Cotterell year by year before finally closing in 1871. The last hats are described in Christy's codes, D471, XE44, etc, but a few names are identifiable: Police Helmet City, Alpine and Tyrol.[42] The 1871 date is supported twice further, in a Christy letter and in a newspaper reminiscence.[43] The reason for closure was 'owing to the development of machinery'. The choice had to be made between more investment at Stockport or at Frampton Cotterell; the answer fell naturally on Stockport where continuous investment had been made in new building.

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[38] CA, letter 13/11/1863.
[39] Martin, *Castorologia*, pp. 53-54.
[40] *HG*, Whitaker, 'Reminiscences', 4/4/1925.
[41] 28/12/1869 (CA, B/P/VV/5/28).
[42] CA, B/R/3/5.
[43] C W Christie-Miller, 27/1/1928; *Bristol Observer*, 7/1/1928.

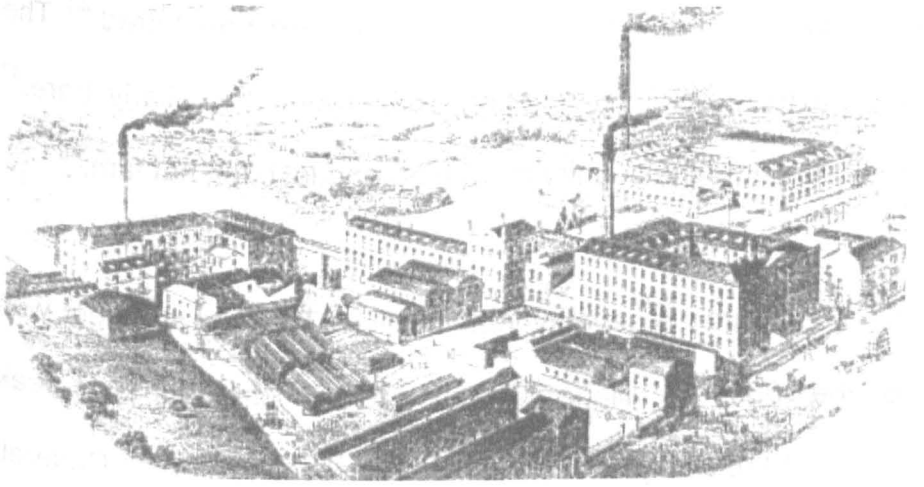

Figure 114: Christy's Stockport works about 1881. Left, the original Canal Street Works, chimney built in 1838, the north end warehouse in 1839 or 1840, the five-storey warehouse 1864; right foreground, the Hillgate Mill before it was destroyed by fire, acquired in 1860; and, right background, South Mill, built in 1874 and enlarged in 1881. A final extension was built in 1909 to deal with a boom in hats when western dress was first adopted in Japan.

At closure, Christy's was reduced to twenty-five employees, more than ten of whom were boy apprentices, a proportion that would never have been allowed when the local trade union was strong. Management reports show that, as the firm approached closure, it steadily built and carefully watched its apprentice numbers. The apprentice boys were faced with either unemployment or leaving their homes. The bulk went to Christy's works at Higher Hillgate, Stockport.[44] Others went to Bermondsey, but 'did not live long'.[45] Christy's retrenched to Stockport and London. The other Frampton Cotterell workers, time-served and tired in their sixties, had no real choice but to stay, despite being offered a move. From 1834-1871, Christy's Stockport employment records show 348 men taken on. Except for a few from Belfast, all were local

[44] George Brown, Glebe Street, Stockport, 'Reminiscences' (*Bristol Observer*, 7/1/1928).
[45] CA, letter 27/1/1928, C W Christie-Miller. *Bristol Observer*, 7/1/1928.

to the Cheshire works; no Frampton Cotterell men were transferred.[46] The new apprentices list for Stockport, covering 1834-1950, is similarly bare.[47] Christy's eventually became the country's premier, and last, felt hat firm.[48]

Frampton Cotterell went into a seventy-year decline. The overall effect was considerable. By the 1880s the village population fell 16% from its 1841 peak and, during the 1914-1918 war, just over half the houses in Frampton Cotterell were either uninhabitable or else in need of serious structural renovation.[49]

The demise of the hatting industry and the changing opportunities for re-employment within the villages in the nineteenth century are evident in occupational analyses of Winterbourne and Frampton Cotterell.[50] Three important industries provided male employment In Winterbourne in 1841, hatting (32%), farming (23%) and extraction, principally coal mining and Pennant stone quarrying (11%); and in Winterbourne and Frampton Cotterell in 1851, hatting (32%, 18%), farming (23%, 28%) and extraction (11%, 17%).

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[46] CA, B/RR/6/11.
[47] Home towns of Christy's Stockport apprentices 1834-1950: Liverpool 29, Manchester 15, Birmingham 10, Coventry 9, Congleton 5, Stoke-on-Trent 5, Derby 4, Macclesfield 3, Leek 1, Newcastle 1 (CA, B/WW/2/22).
[48] Christy & Co. went into voluntary liquidation in 1969 after John Christie-Miller led the 1966 merger of the five remaining English felt hat firms in a new company called Associated British Hat Manufacturers Limited (ABHM). The entire share capital of ABHM's Christy's subsidiary was sold for £1.2 million in 1980 to Cadogan Oakley, a private investment and property company, which reinstated the name of Christy (*Stockport Express*, 10/4/1989; *The Guardian*, 17/12/2007). In 1996, Christy's was sold for £3 million to venture capitalist Maurice Pinto (*Manchester Evening News*, 1/3/1996). Manufacturing is now largely in China (2010).
[49] Spittal, *Notes on Free Churches*.
[50] Appendix 70: *Occupation counts for Winterbourne and Frampton Cotterell, 1841-1901*. The 1841 census for Frampton Cotterell leaves doubt over some occupational groups so this census has been excluded.

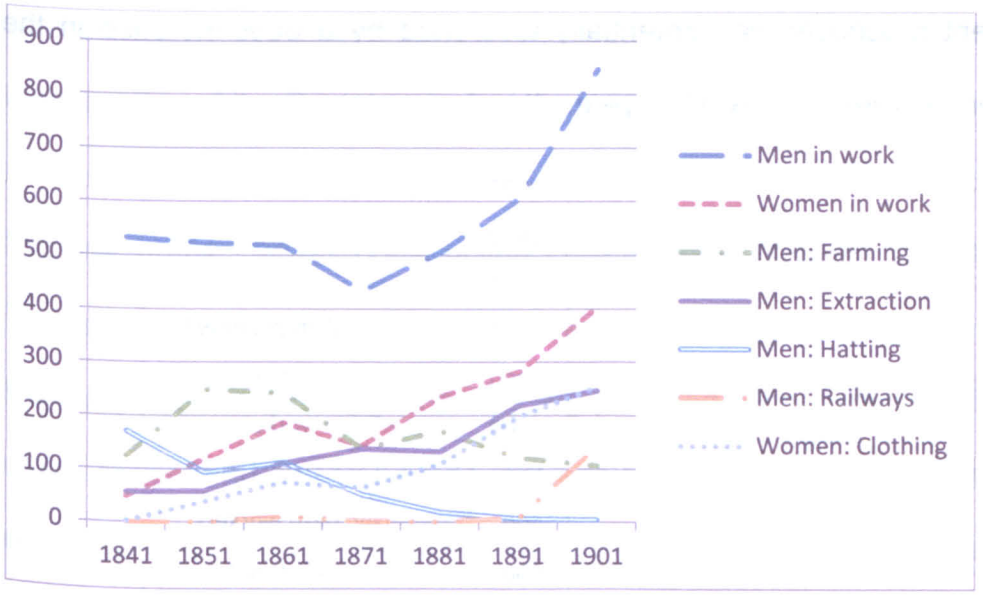

Figure 115: Winterbourne employment, 1841-1901.

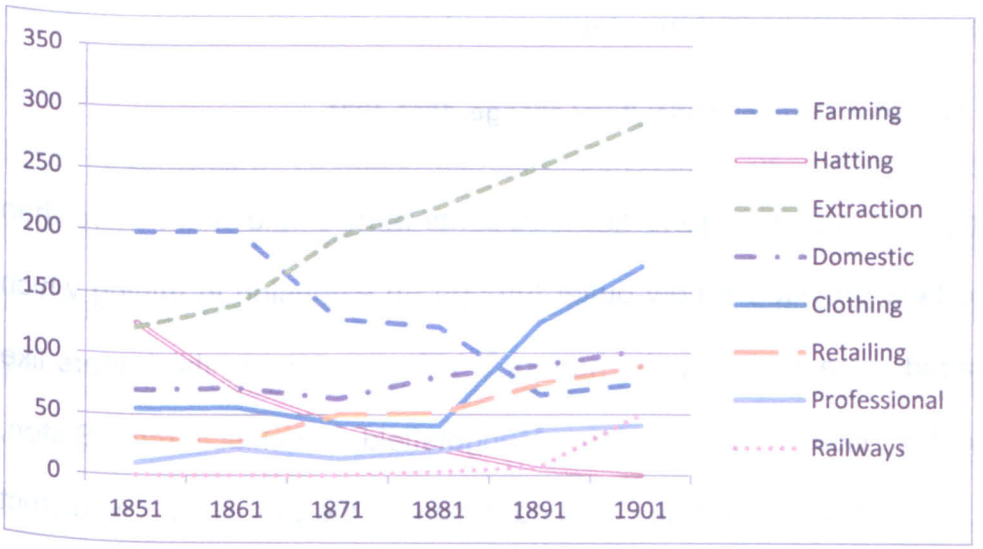

Figure 116: Frampton Cotterell employment, 1851-1901.

There were other important changes for the hatters and their children as they sought new work. There was a significant decline in farm work, almost at the same rate in Frampton Cotterell as for hatting, and this double blow to

employment prospects was potentially worsened by a 60% increase in the male reservoir over the next sixty years.[51]

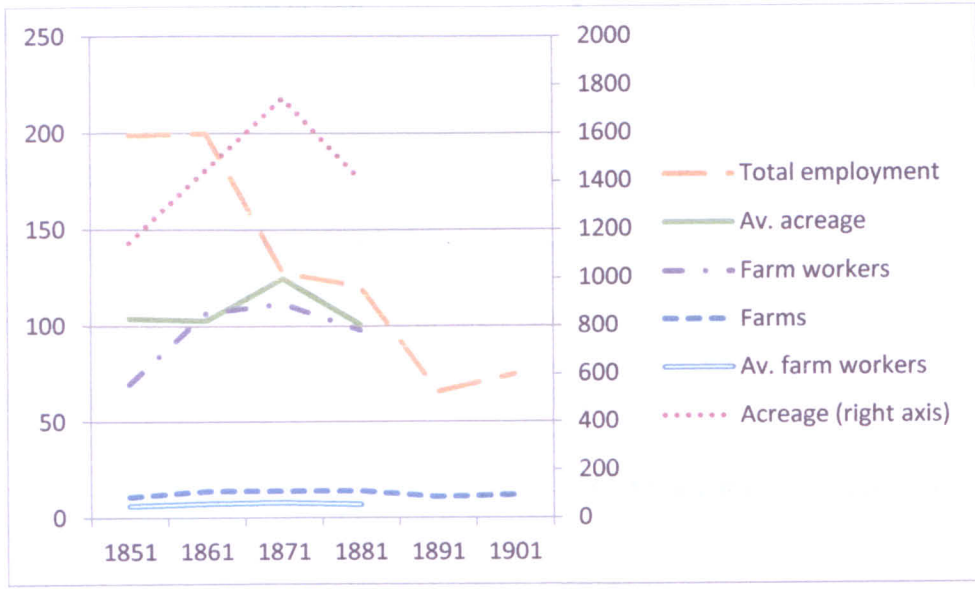

Figure 117: Frampton Cotterell agricultural change, 1851-1901.

With hatting work going or gone and traditional farm employment more than halved, the land provided a new outlet through an extension in mining which was embraced in necessity by the hatters.[52] Villages close to the hatters like Bitton, Coalpit Heath, Iron Acton, Mangotsfield, Pucklechurch, Siston, Stapleton, Westerleigh and Yate, 'abound in coal ... the pits within this district

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[51] *Parish Acreage Returns* (TNA, HO 67/3). Hill, *Social History*, p. 100. John Chartres and Richard Perren, 'Introduction', Part 2, E J T Collins, edited, *The Agrarian History of England and Wales*, general editor, Vol. VII 1850-1914 (CUP 2000), p. 947. Also, Lord Ernle, 'The Great Depression and Recovery, 1874-1914', in P J Perry, *British Agriculture 1875-1914*, edited (London, Methuen 1973) Chapter 1. P J Perry, 'Where Was the Great Agricultural Depression? A Geography of Agricultural Bankruptcy in Late Victorian England and Wales', *The Agricultural History Review*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 1972, p. 39, map V. Perry, *British Agriculture*, pp. xi-xii. Richard Perren, *Agriculture in depression, 1870-1940*, The Economic History Society (CUP 1995), pp. 7, 9, 62. D V Glass and D E C Eversley, editors, *Population in History: Essays in Historical Demography* (London, Edward Arnold 1965), p. 60.

[52] Coal mining and pennant stone quarrying mirrored the South Gloucestershire felt hat industry to a considerable extent. In his extensive review of these coal fields, written in 1873, John Anstie's tracing of the coal seams is a roll call of hatting settlements (Anstie, *The Coal Fields of Gloucestershire and Somersetshire, and Their Resources*, reprint Bath, Kingsmead 1969), particularly pp. 30-45, 63-67, 69-72. Thirsk, 'Industries in the Countryside', p. 219. John Cornwell, *The Bristol Coalfield* (Ashbourne, Landmark 2003), p. 7.

are very numerous and supply, besides that of the neighbourhood, the vast consumption of the Bristol manufacturers'.[53]

Into the 1890s, railway construction on the Great Western, and the Severn Tunnel, and continuing Pennant Stone quarrying for the towns of Bristol, Newport and Weston-super Mare, finally provided full employment for the last of the hatters and their sons.[54] In between times, the character of the villages changed fundamentally. From the 1860s, the female population, especially in the poorest families, kept bread on the family table. Hatters' wives and daughters constituted the bulk of the almost ten-fold increase in Winterbourne female labour from 1841-1901.[55] This new work came from two directions. First, the Bristol clothing industry introduced a cottage industry for seamstresses and tailoresses making shirts and trousers.[56] Almost 63% of the female workforce was employed in this way; over half of these women were of hatting stock.[57] The old hat manufactory, The Factory House, at Watley's End

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[53] Rudge, *General View*, p. 22. Cornwell, *Bristol Coalfield*, pp. 7, 107, 129.

[54] Between 1851 and 1901, the number of people employed on the railways in Gloucestershire (excluding construction) increased over ten-fold from 538 people to 5,656 (Tate, *Village Community*), p. 187.

[55] 1841: 48; 1901, 403.

[56] Ludwell, *Ebenezer Church*, p. 2. Fine tailoring firms in and around Old Market, Bristol, regularly sent clothing materials by carrier to Winterbourne and Watley's End. By 1897, some ninety-three carriers from Bristol operated 344 services to 132 places, making 1,076 scheduled calls per week. There were four routes to the hatting villages: Frenchay, Hambrook, Winterbourne, Frampton Cotterell, Iron Acton, and Rangeworthy; Hanham and Longwell Green; Kingswood, Warmley, Oldland and Bitton; Downend, Fishponds, Mangotsfield and Westerleigh, with a branch to Pucklechurch (*Kelly's Directory*, 1897, pp. 436-438; *Wright's Directory*, 1897, pp. 671-673. J Chilcott, *Descriptive History of Bristol*, Bristol 1816, 1851), pp. 5-6, 8-9.

[57] Nationally, female rural outworkers comprised an 'element of massive growth of women's employment in tailoring': from 17,500 in 1851, 12.6% of all recorded workers in tailoring; 38,000 women accounted for a quarter by 1871; achieved parity with 117,600 employed in 1901 (John Chartres, 'Rural Industry and Manufacturing' in Collins, *Agrarian History*), p. 1120.

turned to making cricket trousers.[58] Second, most of the remaining females at work were employed in domestic service for the growing number of professional and retired residents. Even in very modest households, such as those of master craftsmen, money could be found for at least one servant.[59]

One last alternative when most else locally was failing was economic migration. Local migrations had gradually reduced the populations of some villages and, from 1800, concentrated the hatters around the places where London hat manufacturers established their Gloucestershire outposts.

Individuals were questioned by parish officers or county justices to see if they had a right to settle in and rely on the community. 'One of the key benefits of a completed apprenticeship was settlement and the entitlement to poor relief it brought'.[60] The previously described examination of George Hibbs on his request to move to Westerleigh to take up work was typical.[61] In 1838, Samuel Hale, in an examination, said that he was born in Rangeworthy forty years before and apprenticed to Peter Champion, a hatter in Frampton Cotterell. The apprenticeship was 'given up' at six years and Hale moved to

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[58] Conversation with Winifred Dando, aged 92, who worked in the factory (Private, 2007).
[59] The second half of the nineteenth century saw 'massive growth of the service sector, nationally ...These developments were part of the background to the great expansion of the village carriers (Chartres, 'Rural Industry and Manufacturing'), p. 1186. W E Tate, 'Gloucestershire Enclosure Acts and Awards', *TBGAS*, Vol. 64, 1943, p. 40. Brian Short, 'Rural Demography, 1850-1914', Chapter 21 in *The Agrarian History of England & Wales 1850-1914*, Volume 7, edited E J T Collins (CUP 2000), p. 1232. Rudge, *General View*, pp. 344-346.
[60] Chris Minns and Patrick Wallis, *Rules and Reality: Quantifying the Practice of Apprenticeship in Early Modern Europe*, Working Papers No. 118/09, March 2009, Department of Economic History, London School of Economics, p. 4.
[61] BRO, P.W/OP/6/100.

Painswick where he worked for Thomas Glover. After six months Hale went to 'Wales and other places' and then returned to Glover as a journeyman where he lived, married and worked for twenty-three years.[62]

If the choice was to stay in the hatting trade, but to leave South Gloucestershire, there are many individual and early examples of a ready mobility both into and out of the county. Unemployment and lures took many hundreds of English hatters overseas to France, Portugal, Spain and Canada, particularly in the 1760s.[63] In the often forgotten second part of the repeals of the Combinations Laws in 1824-1825, the restriction which forbade the emigration of artisans was also discarded.[64]

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Joseph Maggs of Downend and, later, Winterbourne, set up as the hatter of Ludlow in Broad Street, but where his wife spent time in the poor house.[65] An arm of the Dando family moved from Dursley, through factories at Mangotsfield and Watley's End, to London where they became wealthy and one of them, Jonathan, Master of the London Feltmaker Company in 1828.[66] Another Joseph Maggs, with brother Robert, both Winterbourne hatters, married the Ashbee sisters of Tetbury and established hat businesses there and became landlords of the *Ormonds Head*

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[62] GA, 26/8/1838, *Painswick Settlement Examination*.
[63] Appendix 37: *Unemployment and overseas lures, 1764-1769*.
[64] 5 George IV, c. 97 (1824); 6 George IV, c. 129 (1825). Orth, *Combination*, Appendices II-IV, pp. 162-171.
[65] Birth records, Mangotsfield (BRO). Marriage and birth records, St Laurence Parish Church, Ludlow. Paupers supported in the Poor-House (*Overseers of the Poor*, 24/10/1817).
[66] LGL, Sun Fire Archive, MS 11936/486/968429. BRO, FCW/1829/7. GA, Q/Rel/220508. Weinstein, *Feltmakers*, p. 130.

in the 1840s.[67] Hatting in Frome in Somerset was established by several Frampton Cotterell feltmakers. At about this time, the remarkable Spill brothers of Winterbourne, one a hatter, the other a doctor, used their knowledge of waterproofing hats to set up India rubber and waterproof clothing factories (oil skins) covering two acres in Hackney Wick in London.[68] Their first, small, but important, invention was the air-hole eyelets set into their garments to make them more comfortable to wear. In 1861, their factory was severely damaged in a neighbouring explosion.[69] Daniel Spill's fortune began when he met an order to supply 40,000 coats, leggings and hoods for the army in Crimea within forty days. On the last day, the uninsured factory burned to the ground.[70]

A study in migration into Frampton Cotterell showed that, in the ten years before 1851, 601 people, attracted by the mine work, moved into the village, 34.4% of the population and, of these, 90% came from within twenty miles.[71] In each of the three decades after 1851, the in-migrants dropped to around 350 people, near 18%. As this village's population was overall in decline, the corollary was a dramatic out-migration, averaging up to 44% a decade to

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[67] Apprentice indenture (BRO, P.Wi/OP/3/3). 1841-1861 census; Tetbury parish records (GA); www.freeBMD; *Slater's Trade Directory* 1840.

[68] Pictures of George Spill & Company, c. 1855 (*Science Museum Picture Library*, 1041856-7). *Morning Chronicle*, 19/2/1855.

[69] *Daily News*, 11/6/1861, 21/12/1867.

[70] *The Era*, 21/1/1865,. Daniel Spill finally prospered with Alexander Parkes in the British Xylonite Company in 1877, based on the development of Parkesine, later known as Celluloid. Stephen Fenichell, *Plastic: The Making of a Synthetic Century* (New York, Harper Business 1996), pp. 17-19, 49-54. *Lloyd's Weekly*, 12/12/1875; *Reynold's Newspaper*, 8/10/1882.

[71] If the distorting affect of incoming Cornish iron miners is removed, the figure falls to under five miles. These short distances support the first law of migration formulated by Ernest George Ravenstein, *The Birthplaces of the People and the Laws of Migration* (1876; reprint USA, Kessinger 2009). D B Grigg, 'E G Ravenstein and the laws of migration', *Journal of Historical Geography*, Vol. 3, Issue 1, January 1977, pp. 41-54.

1881. For the hatters, this was sufficient to empty the village of their skills. The village was also deprived of young blood. The two most likely groups of movers were those aged under thirty, and females; almost 30% of families migrated together in each decade.[72] There were numerous connections to hatting centres particularly south of Manchester and at Lambeth, south of the Thames, where by 1851 over thirty Gloucestershire men worked. Many county feltmakers moved into Bristol to work on their own or to join small bands of journeymen supporting a city hat master. The Bristol employment market became fertile ground for small enterprises in the provinces.[73]

In the later part of the century, the dismemberment of the Bristol hatting trade was almost complete.[74] Most of the great family firms had ended and those that continued, like Garlick and Parsley, became clothing department stores, albeit with a continuing display of hats for all occasions and both sexes.[75] National twentieth century brands, like *Dunn* and *The Don*, made their first

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[72] Steve Hillyard, *Migration to and from Frampton Cotterell: 1851-1881* (unpublished Final Project Report, Open University 1997). Ravenstein's eleventh law of migration states that the main reason for migration was economics.

[73] '1867, Exeter: To Journeymen hatters, wanted a man who can finish and shape, with a wife who can trim and make crowns. Regular employment and good prices' (*BM*, 22/6/1867); '1870, Cardiff: To Hatters, wanted good finisher. Must have some knowledge of shaping' (*BM*, 9/4/1870); '1873, Portsea: To journeymen hatters, wanted a steady man who understands body making and finishing, constant work' (*BM*, 5/4/1873); '1878, Penzance: Wanted in a hatter's shop, an energetic Young Man, a good Salesman and Window Dresser, and experienced in the trade. Good references required' (*BM*, 21/12/1878); '1883, Manchester: Cap and hat manufacturer wishes to meet with an agent to represent him in Bristol wholesale only' (*Bristol Mercury & Daily Post*, 26/2/1883).

[74] For the general decline of the producer retailer after 1850 and the corresponding rise of the wholesaler, see Jefferys, *Retail Trading*, pp. 10-11.

[75] 'These years saw the triumph of the fixed shop as the dominant form of retailing trading, and the emergence on a significant scale of large-scale distributive organisations – the department store, the Co-operative Society, and the multiple shop firm' (Jefferys, *Retail Trading*), p. 6.

appearance in Bristol.[76] Across the city there were dozens of small shops with proud hatting histories selling what they could. A few discreet, dingy-entranced, specialists, like John Cory Withers and Henry Simmons, a prominent Jewish immigrant from Prussia, continued to entertain the well-to-do. In 1884, eight substantial wholesale firms remained, four of them on Castle Green.[77] Some of their stories are told optimistically in advertising books of the time.[78] However, their steady decline is better reflected in a series of trade reports made from Bristol to the *Hatters' Gazette* between 1873-1901.[79]

Gilbert and George Howes was one of the few firms to move successfully from the villages to the city (to Castle Street c. 1864) and, by 1900, to Newfoundland Road; the last of the younger hatters from Watley's End moved to join them. Howes Brothers employed over 400 people in a highly-mechanised and mostly export business of some quarter of a million of mixed hats and caps a year.[80] The firm was the only Bristol felt hat manufacturer among the eighty-eight English firms registered under Government

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[76] The Don was, in full, the Don Association of Woollen Manufacturers, founded in 1877, as a forerunner in England of the *German Woollen Movement* and *Dr Jaegar's Sanitary Woollen Clothing* – the *Jaeger* chain in the twenty-first century (Alison Adburgham, *Shops and Shopping 1800-1914, Where and in What Manner The Well-dressed Englishwoman Bought her Clothes*, London, Allen and Unwin 1964), pp. 184, 191. The Don had two shops in London and Birmingham, three in Liverpool, and one each in Manchester and Bristol. The latter opened in 1883; its premises in Wine Street were destroyed during the second world war.

[77] Betty Brothers, Victoria Street; H D Carver and Son, Castle Green; T Glass and Co, Castle Green; Howes Brothers, Newfoundland Road; Lewis F March and Co, Castle Green; H Simmons, St James's Barton; Stabbins and Tyler, Castle Green (*Arrowsmith's Dictionary of Bristol*, 1884), p. 158.

[78] Laurence Cowen, 'Lesser Columbus', *Greater Bristol*, 2nd edition (London, Pelham Press 1893), pp. 178-204. *Ports of the Bristol Channel*, unattributed (Bristol, Progress: Commerce, 1893).

[79] Appendix 71: *Bristol hatting trade reports, 1873-1901.*

[80] *Ports of the Bristol Channel*, p. 210.

regulations in 1902.[81] This list shows not only how far Bristol felt hat manufacture declined, but also how important were the industrial winners: Denton in Lancashire had thirty-six factories with the surrounding towns of Stockport, Hyde and Manchester contributing a further twenty-four.

In 1904 the Howes partnership was dissolved and George, the older brother, was to carry on alone and to 'assume responsibility for all debts'.[82] The deeds were deposited with Lloyds Bank as security and George took out a mortgage with a Henry Bush.[83] The end came in 1909.[84] Three years before, the Bank took control of the estate and mortgage; in 1908, George borrowed a further £100 from Bush, and, in August 1909, George cleared 'Howes Old Account' of £127 and gave it to Gilbert. Two months later, George sold the entire property for £1,125; the Bank took £1,100 and George just £25.[85]

Increasing freedom of expression through dress occasioned by the two world wars brought further consolidation and reduction in the industry. In 1945 there were fifty-four English members of the British Felt Hat Manufacturers' Federation, none of them from the West Country.[86]

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[81] Factories & Workshop Act 1901: Regulations for the manufacture of felt hats, 1902. Felt hat manufacturers: Denton 36, Stockport 16, London 9, Atherstone 7, Hyde 4, Luton 4, Manchester 4, Bedworth 2, Bury 2, Nuneaton 2, Bristol 1, Carlisle 1 (TNA, LAB 14/170).
[82] Date of agreement 30/6/1904; date of notice 1/7/1904 (*LG*, 8/7/1904).
[83] Deeds with Lloyds Bank, 3/3/1904; mortgage with Henry Graham Bush, 9 Bridge Street, Bristol, gentleman, for manufactory, cottages and hereditaments in Newfoundland and Wellington Roads, 19/7/1904 (BRO, 38609).
[84] In 1906, Howes were listed in the *Bristol Telephone Directory* as 'Bristol 705'.
[85] BRO, 38609/24/a.
[86] Denton 11; Stockport 9; Atherstone 6; Luton 6; Bury 3; Hyde 3; Audenshaw 2; Bedworth 2; and Aylesbury, Bredbury, Carlisle, Delph, Failsworth, Manchester, Nuneaton, Preston, Radcliffe, Rochdale, Romiley, St Albans, 1 each (TNA, DD 233/68, taken from Michael Nevell,

Conclusions

The loss of the slave and North American trades, the rise of the American factories, and the arrival of the French silk hat, all contributed to a rocky nineteenth century for the regional hatters. These, however, were not the primary reasons for what happened next. It is a great irony that the collapse was caused by the very factors that formed a Tudor industry over 300 years before: new technology in the felt bow and the monopolies of civic control and village apprenticeship. The feltmakers refused to give up their bow in the face of fur forming machines. The hatters' independence from city bullying through tight control of craft apprenticeship brought them eventually to open conflict with their London masters.

The local union lost its fight over apprenticeship in the 1830s and with it the trust of the now international hat manufacturers. Increasingly, bosses were no longer local, or even from London, and no longer thought locally. The Frampton Cotterell men won their fight in the 1850s against the forming machines which 'dispensed with fully one half the labour of the body maker, and especially the most skilled part of it'.[87] As a result, the value of the local men became solely, and ironically again, their high felting skills based on solid training. These skills just kept some of the manufactories open during the felt hat revival of the 1860s.

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with Brian Grimsditch, and Ivan Hradil, *Denton and the Archaeology of the Felt Hatting Industry*, Vol. 7, Archaeology of Tameside, Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council 2007), pp. 100-101.

[87] *HG*, Whittaker, 'Reminiscences', 1925.

The hatters' obstinate stands required a considerable self belief which was empowered by their elitism, their union and their chapel. However, as with many other textile industries, the hatters had no answer to the mechanisation and centralisation demanded by new concentrated wealth and a fashion-led public. The machines quickly proved the 'death blow' to the old methods. 'This naturally caused great consternation and regret among the old hatters, who took much pride in their handicraft.' Investment and machinery by-passed the men and the industry moved to Stockport.[88] Places like Frampton Cotterell, Iron Acton, Oldland Common and Watley's End with their squatters dotted around the newly-enclosed commons were all eventual casualties of the broader revolution.[89]

The change in the hatting villages' residential and occupational structure meant that the work available to the once proud hatters, with their now useless craft apprenticeship systems, was almost entirely manual. Their particular impoverishment took them into the pits and quarries, or on the new rail routes. In a generation, the hatters and their sons had fallen from the villages' labour aristocrats to become miners and navies, and their wives and daughters provided vital financial support as servants and sweated cottage labour.

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[88] For a view of the hat factory to come, David Collier Mills, *The Twentieth Century Hat Factory* (Danbury, Connecticut, Lee-McLachlan 1910-11).
[89] Gilbert, *Religion and Society*, pp. 112-113.

By 1909, in Bristol, it was a case of generalised retail and department stores selling felt hats made by someone unknown, working outside of the county.

12 Forgotten

At the beginning of this thesis, a first question was asked: 'Why are hatters ignored by historians?' It is now possible to attempt an answer. There is every reason to be bold about the fascinating position occupied by this sizable regional trade. More men worked on hats than blew Bristol glass, or turned brass, or made paper, perhaps 4,000, estimated at 114,605 man years, about twenty-eight years' service per hatter.[1] Re-applying the formula for hat production developed for assessing the export market, the total South Gloucestershire output exceeds forty million hats.[2]

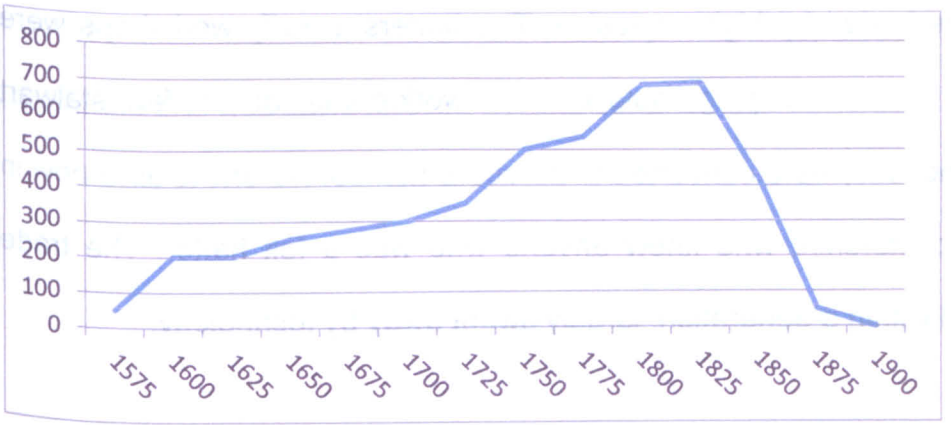

Figure 118: Estimated village hatter employment, 1575-1900.

Hatters can also now claim a place in histories on medieval Spanish trade, the Tudor projects, technological shifts, the decline of the guilds, slave trade cargoes, the monopoly of craft entry, Bristol's hinterland, the birth of trade unionism, industrialisation in the country, occupational health, Methodism, and, yet, the business of felt hats receives little mention anywhere.

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[1] Appendix 3: *Village hatters, 1575-1901.*
[2] Chapter 6: *Bristol Overseas Trade, 1600-1855.*

David Corner saw felt hats trapped between the thoroughly acceptable study of textiles with a slightly uneasy recognition, and misunderstanding, of the felt hat as exclusively a luxury item, not knitted and not woven.[3] Unwin apart, the English felt hat trade has no champion of stature. Thirsk saw hat manufacture as one of those industries, like pin making and woad growing or, closer to Bristol, rope making and the dock trades generally, which deserved close attention.[4] Of course, it could be because the research is difficult, there being few easy pickings. Time is needed in unsympathetic archives to build slowly an acceptable picture. There are only a handful of 'monuments' and none of these housed a noisy furnace or surrounded a hole in the ground.[5] The city heritage was buried by high explosive. The hatters' scruffy workshops were dismantled, and the sloping roofs of their workrooms, and a few stalwart managers' houses, were converted to attractive homes. No-one is alive now in South Gloucestershire who knew anyone who was a felt hatter. The trade disappeared within a generation, largely swept away by technology.

With hindsight, the whole trade was eventually a failure, not just around Bristol, but 100 years later, across the country. Christy hats are now made in China. Historians prefer success. 'Industrial decline is a subject curiously neglected by economic historians who are generally more concerned to point out the triumphs of industrialization and the growth of new regions'.[6] Randall

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[3] Corner, 'Tyranny', p. 163.
[4] Thirsk, *Policy*, p. vi.
[5] W D Rubinstein, 'The Victorian Middle Classes: Wealth, Occupation and Geography', *Economic History Review*, 2nd Series, XXX, No. 4, 1977, p. 622.
[6] Berg, *Manufactures*, p. 99.

agreed that 'studies have tended to concentrate upon regions of dynamic industrial growth ... rather than those which failed to respond to the challenge of change'.[7]

Despite all of these excuses, there is one overriding reason for the lack of excitement generated today by the trade. It truly was a private affair. The men apprenticed their own family and friends, and married into the same group. They lived in clusters, a poor elite among the labouring countryside. Few noticed them; their work places were not on the routes to anywhere. They gathered their unionism and Methodism around them, and set their own rules and lived their own lives. When the industry was in its death throes and, quickly, the skill was gone forever, no-one commented.

[7] Randall, *Luddites*, p. 5; Randall 'Work, culture and resistance to machinery in the West of England woollen industry', p. 175, in Pat Hudson, edited, *Regions and industries, A perspective on the industrial revolution in Britain* (CUP 1989).

Appendix 1: Christy Archive

Much of the available story of Christy's factory at Frampton Cotterell is held in the Christy Archive at the Local Heritage Library in Stockport. Most of the archive is not connected directly with the South Gloucestershire operation.[1] In general, it is surprising how few times Frampton Cotterell is mentioned considering its early importance.[2] The archive is a bulky and disparate, collection of business and family records, perhaps over 100,000 documents; some two-thirds of which disappeared after storage in a damp cellar during the second world war.[3] Subsequently, some important records have been identified and then misfiled or lost. The Library confirms that there used to be a fuller 'Frampton File'.[4] Current day researchers are sometimes forced to rely on previous investigations for proof that a document existed and said what is claimed.[5] None of the above is helped by the Christys' handwriting and inter-family and trade abbreviations.

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[1] The archive contains many packets containing dozens of items of often unconnected material. Valiant cataloguing is in three volumes for which a specific request must be made (Stockport Local Heritage Library, SA15: Vol. 11, 383 pages; Vol. 12, fifty-four pages; and Vol. 13, two pages).

[2] Nick Howe, Stockport, Hat Works Museum, and descendant of Joseph Howe & Sons, hat manufacturer, Denton, described hat manufacturers as exhibiting an 'almost pathological secrecy about their operations' to the extent that much was unwritten and most of the rest destroyed on closure (Conversation 2007).

[3] J S Moore, *History in Winterbourne, Frampton Cotterell & Stoke Gifford*, p. 10 (Undated lecture notes).

[4] Archivist, Local Heritage Library, email 2007.

[5] The principal studies that have used the archive are Giles, 'Felt-Hatting'; Smith, *Hat Trades*; McKnight, *Stockport Hatting*, and Turner, *First Shop*.

Appendix 2: Legislation affecting the hat industry, 1500-1825

Available on *Thesis Excel (.xlsx) file.*

Appendix 3: Village hatters, 1575-1901

Available on thesis 'Excel (.xlsx) file'.

The number of village hatters assembled in decennial groups in the long-term surname collection is currently 3,901. This finding, by its nature, is record-dependent and haphazard. Considerable parish records of Winterbourne, for instance, were burned in a barn fire in 1838.[1] Many individual hatters are mentioned more than once, especially during the decades of the national census. Equally, many unrecognised life-long hatters receive just one or a few mentions during the eighteenth century and earlier. For instance, named hatters in Frampton Cotterell fall from 129 in 1781-1790 to thirty-six and twenty-four in the next two decades before rising to 132 in 1811-1820. This is due to the expected problem of under-reporting of occupational information in parish records. From the census year of 1841, decennial trade employment by individual can be extracted directly from the enumerators' copies of the census takers' outputs.[2] How many men worked as feltmakers in the South Gloucestershire villages? The collection of individuals accumulated from all of the found records produces 2,389 names with a natural emphasis from 1750 onwards. So, extrapolating for the early names which are almost all missing, and a general under-recording, a final tally might be near 4,000 men.

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[1] Moore, 'Winterbourne AD 2000', p. 9.

[2] 1841-1901 censuses (available www.ancestry.co.uk, accessed 2001 onwards). University of Essex Online Historical Population Reports 1811-1911 (available www.histpop.org, accessed 2007 onwards).

Appendix 4: Stubbes' anatomy of the abuses of hats, 1583[1]

Sometimes they were the sharp on the crowne, pearking up like a sphere, or shafte of a steeple. Standing a quarter of a yard above the crowne of their heads; some more, some lesse, as please the phantasies of their minds. Othersome be flat and broad on the crowne, like the battlements of a house. An other sorte have round crownes, sometimes with one kinde of bande, sometime with an other; nowe blacke, now white, now russet, now red, now greene, now yellowe, now this, nowe that, never content with ne colour of fashion two dayes to an ende. And thus in vanitie they spende the Lorde his treasure, confirming their golden years and silver dayes in wickednes and sin. And as the fashions bee rare and straunge, so are the thinges wherof their Hattes be made, diverse also; for some are of silke, some of velvet, some of taffetie, some of sarcenet, some of wooll: and which is more curious, some of a certain kind of fine haire, far fetched and deare bought, you may bee sure [These thei call Bever hattes of xx, xxx or xl shillings price fetched from beyond the seas, from whence a greate sorte of other varieties doe come besides]; And so common a thinge it is, that everie Servingman, Countreyman, and other, even all indifferently, do weare of these hattes. For he is of no account or estimation amongst men, if hee have not a velvet or a taffatie Hatte, and that muste bee pincked and cunningly carved of the beste fashion; And good profitable Hattes bee they, for the longer you weare them the fewer holes they have. Besides this, of late, there is a new fashion of

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[1] Phillip Stubbes, *Anatomy of the Abuses in England in Shakspere's Youth, AD 1583*, Part 1, edited Frederick J Furnivall (London, New Shakspere Society 1877-9), pp. 50-51.

wearing their Hattes sprung up amongst them, which they father upon the Frenchman, namely to weare them without bandes; but how unseemelie (I will not say how Assy) a fashion that is, let the wife judge. Notwithstanding, howe ever it bee, if it please them, it shall not displease me.

Appendix 5: Felt hat manufacture, 1750

This article is from the 'Hatter's Gazette' of 1888. It is a reprint of an unattributed article first run in the 'Universal Magazine' of 1750 as part of a review of manufactures. The original publication has not been found. It is significant as the most thorough eighteenth century description of the trade and provides a cohesive link between the description of Robert Hooke's investigation of 1666 (figure 18, appendices 12 and 13) and those of feltmaker manuals of the nineteenth century. An engraving from the 1750 article is reproduced as figure 19.[1]

In this manufacture, they generally employ women to tear off, and cut the hair from the skins, with the knives above mentioned: and when the hair is cleared from the skin, they mix the stiff in the proportion of one-third of dry castor, or two-thirds of old coat, which is a skin that has been worn by the savages from some time. This stuff, mixed, is delivered to the carders, who prepare it for the hatter; and they weigh it out into parcels, according to the size or thickness of the hat intended. They then teize each parcel with a bow-string, to purify it from all dust and filth, and, which is the most difficult work of the whole art, to make the stuff fall precisely together, so that it shall be everywhere of the same thickness; which operation requires both skill and dexterity of hand. Thus they form hats of an oval form, ending in an acute angle at top – and with what stuff remains, they supply and strengthen them in places where they happen to be slenderer than ordinary: though it must be observed, that they designedly make them thicker in the brim, near the crown, than towards the circumference, or in the crown itself.

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[1] *Universal Magazine*, 4/1750, reprinted *HG*, 2/7/1888, pp. 366-367.

Their next care is to harden these hats into closer or more consistent flakes, by pressing down the hardening skin, or leather, upon them. After which they are carried to the bason, upon which, laying one of the hardened hats at a time, they sprinkle it over with water, and mould it; and the heat of the fire, with the water and pressing, imbody the stuff into a slight hairy sort of stuff, or felt. The maker, having turned up the edges of this felt all around over the mould, lays it by, and proceeds with another; which, being in like manner reduced to the same consistence and form, he joins them together so as to make them meet, after the manner of Hippocrates's sleeve, in an angle at top, making only one conical cap.

The next process is to remove the hat to the receiver or trough, upon the plank or sloping side of which, the basoned hat is laid, being first dipped in the kettle. And here we find the work grow very laborious; for the hatter most now roll and unroll it again and again, one part after another, fist with the hand, and then with a little wooden roller, taking care to dip it from time to time, for four or five hours before it can be properly fulled and thickened, or reduced to the extent or dimensions of the intended hat. In which violent labour, the workmen usually guard their hands with thick leather, which they call gloves.

A hat, thus wrought in the form of a conical cap, is reduced into a proper shape on the block, of the intended size of the crown tied down with a commander; and all under this string is left for the brim. In which station it is

set to dry. And when it is dry enough, it is sindged, by holding it over a flair of straw, to take off the coarse nap; then they use the seal-skin, above mentioned; and, lastly, carded with a fine card, to raise the fine cotton, with which the hat is to appear when finished; then fitting it to the block, they tie it, cut round the edges, and deliver it to the dyers, who boils it in a large copper, that generally holds ten to twelve dozen of hats, with a dye made of logwood, verdigris, copperas, and alder-bark, galls and sumac, for three-quarters of an hour at a time, ten or twelve times successively, taking every hat out after each boiling to cool.

The dyer returns it to the maker, who hangs it out to dry in the roof of the stove or oven, under which is a charcoal fire; and this prepares it for stiffening, which is performed with melted glue, or gum Seneca, smeared over the hat with a brush, and rubbed in with the hand. Then, having spread as cloth over the steaming bason, and sprinkled it with water to raise a strong steam to force in the stiffening, it is placed thereon, brim downwards; and when it is found moderately hot, the workman strikes gently on the brim, with the flat of his hand, to make the jointing incorporate and bind, so as not to appear; turning it from time to time, this way and that way, and at last overturning and setting it on the crown. And when it has been sufficiently steamed and dried, it is put again on the block, brushed and ironed on a bench or table, called the stall-board; by which means the hat is smoothed and receives a gloss, and finished ready to be lined.

In his set of tools 'proper for his business', the feltmaker had a large knife to cut the long hairs; a pruning knife, to shave or shape off the shorted hairs; fine cards, like those used in the woollen manufactory, to card the hair or wool; a hurdle, or square table; a single-string bow, longer than a man, worked with a little bow-stick, and thus made to play on the furs, which fly and mix together, the dust and the filth at the same time passing down through the hurdle; *in lieu* of a bow some Hatters make use of a sieve or searce of hair, through which they pass the stuff; a hardening skin; a bason, which is a bench, with an iron plate fitted and a little fire under it; moulds of different sizes; a receiver or trough, sloping or narrowing down from the rim, which is a copper-kettle filled with water and grounds kept hot: blocks of different sizes from the crown of the hats to be made; a commander or piece of packthread to tie the crown of the hat round and fast to the wooden block; a stamper, a bent piece of iron or copper, to beat down the commander to its proper place; a pumice: seal-skin; and an oven for drying the hats; a steaming-bason, an iron plate three feet high, exactly covering the hearth; a stall board; flat irons to be heated before the fire; and brushes and scissors. The shop furnished, the feltmaker provides a good stock of wool, old coats, castor or beaver, hare, coney, and camel's hair.

Appendix 6: Petitions of the cap and hat makers, 1531

Shrewsbury	26 Jan 1531	HL/PO/JO/10/3/178/1
Bridgnorth	29 Jan 1531	HL/PO/JO/10/3/178/2
Bristol[1]	11 Feb 1531	HL/PO/JO/10/3/178/3
Borough	[1531]	HL/PO/JO/10/3/178/4
Bewdley	[1531]	HL/PO/JO/10/3/178/6
Gloucester	[1531]	HL/PO/JO/10/3/178/5
Stafford	[1531]	HL/PO/JO/10/3/178/7
Lichfield	[1531]	HL/PO/JO/10/3/178/8

Petitions of the cap and hat makers of Bristol that penalties may be inflicted, in accordance with the provisions of the Act 21 Henry VIII, c.9, upon all persons selling French caps and hats at a higher price than that allowed by the said Act.[2]

To the Kyng owre Sovereign Lorde and to his moost Honourable Counsaill

Pleaseth it your highnes and your moost noble counsaill to have p[er]fite knowlege what damages doth ensue to your said Highnes and to the Subgectes of this your Realme by reason of bryngyng of Frenssh Cappes and Hattes owte of dyverse p[ar]ties from beyonde the See Which is to the utter destruction of all your powre Subgectes Cappe makers and Hatte makers inhabited within your towne of Bristowe

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[1] Transcribed (with thanks to Margaret McGregor, archivist and researcher, Bristol).
[2] HCL.

Where of late your highnes by the advise of your Lordes spirituall and temporall and Comyns assembled in your high Courte of Parliament last holden at West[minster] establisshed and inacted for the comon welth of your poore Subgectes Cappe makers and Hatte makers . that no Cappe made owte of this your Realme shulde be solde above the price of .ij. s. nor any hatte above the price of x d nor any sengle crowned Cappe or nyght Cappe above the price of .vj .d. And that upon payne that every person mysusyng the said Statute shulde forfaite for every Cappe or hatte solde above the said price .xl.s. **Which** Acte if it were duely obs[er]ved and kept were to the greate weale and p[ro]fite of us your poore Subgectes being Inhabited within your saide Towne of Bristowe. Which is occupied in greate part thereof by makyng of Cappes and Hattes to the Nombre of xv.c. persons poore people men women and children which geteth theire moost lyvyng oonly by makyng of the saide Cappes and Hattes. as parters. Forcers. Kembers. Carders. Spynners. Knytters. Thickers. Dressers. Dyers.and Pressers of Cappes. And noo cappe can be made. but he must goo thrugh the Handes of thise poore people. And they all have theire levyng by the same to the greate Releef and comforte of your saide Subgectes. And myght be moche more p[ro]fitable and many moor ydull people sette werke within this your saide Towne if the saide Acte were duely obs[er]ved and kepte. **Where** as now by dyv[er]s chapmen commyng fro London downe into the Countrey to Feyers and Merkettes for singuler welthe and p[ro]fite of very few p[er]sons to the Nombre of us your poore Subgectes doth sell Frenshe Cappes and Hatts disguysed with Rebandes. Aglettes. buttons. and suche other like. Whereby

all suche Cappes and Hattes made by us your poore Subgectes of Bristowe. and other Townes theraboute byn litle regarded. And have no course In Consideration wherof it may in the way of Charitie pleas your Highnes (tenderly consideryng the greate utilite and p[ro]fite that by cons[er]vyng the said Statute to be kepte in due Ordre may ensue to your Subgectes of this your poore Towne. And the greate enormytie and fynall destruction that myght folowe to a greate Nombre of your poore Subgectes by the mysusyng of the said Statute) of your moost habundant grace to p[ro]ve suche condigne punysshement to be used and doon to the said misusers. as may be to the ensample of such other like Offenders. And. as the said Statute may be from hensforth furmely obs[er]ved] and kepte. And thenne suche people Which nowe for lak of Occupacion fallen dailly to Thefte and other Inconveniences may be sette to Werke. And this your poore Towne to be moche better inhabited and replenysshed which now decaith. **Wherefor** we in moost humble wise mekely beseke your moost excellent highnes to tendre this your said Towne of Bristowe in the p[re]missez And we shall dailly pray to god for your moost noble estate in riall felicite to p[ro]spere and endure. And for the more surety that the p[re]misses be of truth. the Seale of thoffice of the Mairaltie of your said Towne of Bristowe for the comon weale of the same is to thise presentz putte. Yoven at your said Towne of Bristowe the xjth day of February. In the xxijth of your most noble Reign.

Appendix 7: The Ancient Hat Trade of Norwich, 1543

> Few trades have a more interesting history than that of hat-manufacturing in the United Kingdom. Hatters will do well to keep this fact before them, and always be on the look-out for information concerning the past. There is much entertainment, and even inspiration to be gathered from a knowledge of the conditions under which our predecessors lived and laboured. The following from the *Hatter's Book, 1543,* has been specially abstracted from Norwich archives for the *Hatters' Gazette*:[1]

To the Right Worshipfull Maister Meyer, the Aldermen and Commen Assemble of the Cite of Norwiche – Humbly shewen unto your maistershippes your oratours, the artificers of hattys making inhabyting w^t^in the seide Cyte, that where now of late diuers honest cytezens of the seide Cyte haue inuentyd and begune the craft of hattes makyng w^t^in the same Cyte whiche they can now make as well and good as ever ~~came oute of Fraunce or Flaunders or~~ [~~'were~~ *made in' substituted*] any other realm, whereby they haue honest lyuynges and sett many persons, pore peple and chyldern of the seide Cyte, on work, which is and shalbe moche for the commen welthe of the seide Cyte yf the same craft may be exersysed w^t^out gyle and deceipt. And lyketh yt your maystershyppys, so yt is that now of late diuers covetous and forward persons of the seide Cyte, more regarding their owne priuate lucre, gotten by deceipte and untrowth, then the good continuance of ther seide craft and meynteyning of the commen welth of the seide Cyte, haue of late made theyr hattes so unworkmanly and w^t^ suche unlawfull and deciptfull stuffe, as w^t^ hear,[2] sterche and syse, that suche persons as haue worne and occupied the same

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[1] *HG*, 1/5/1906, pp. 258-259; 2/7/1906, pp. 371-372; 1/8/1906, p. 427.
[2] Hair.

deciptfull hattes and haue ben deceyuid w^t^ them, do now uniuersally suspecte all hattes made in Norwiche to be deceyptfull, whereby the seid occupacion is lyke to falle to utter decaye onles some good statutes and ordynaunces be made by your maystershyppis by auctoryte of your common assemble for the represse and puttyng awey of all deceipte and untrowthe to be used in the seid occupacion. Yt may *therfor* lyke/ your Maystershippys the premises concideryd to make and establysshe by auctoryte of your seide Assemble, suche good actys and ordennances as may be for the puttyng awey of all deceipte and untrowth from hensforth to be used in the seid occupacion whiche shalbe for the good contynnance therof and moche for the commen welthe of the seide Cyte *Upon whiche sute* and petition then worshipfull Maister Edward Rede Alderman and meyer of the seide Cyte/ the Aldermen and Commens of the same/ assemlyd at theyr commen assemble holden w^t^in the Guyld Halle of the seide Cyte the Wednesday the xxiiij day of y moneth of Octobre in the xxxv yere of the reyne of oure soverayn lord Henry the Eyght by the Grace of God/ of Inglande france and Ireland King/ Defendor of the feythe/ and in erth supreme hedd of the churche of Ingland and Irelande for the good continuance of the seide occupacion & the good order & conformyte of the Artificers of the same haue by auctoryte of their seide commen Assemble ordeynid, enacted, and establlysshed and do ordeyne enacte and establisshe in maner and forme as hereafter foloweth that is to say *Fyrst* that no person or persons of the craft or occupacion of hatmakyng inhabytyng w^t^in the seide Cyte or suburbes of the same, shall from hensforth make any hatte felt of any kynde of beastes hear or flok, or of any other thing but of estriche

wolle only, or of estriche wolle and englysshe wolle sufficiently mixed together/ nor shall from hensforth use nor occupie any sterche or syse into or for the makyng of any hatte felte And that euery Hatte felte aswell bare feltes as thrummyd feltes shalbe evinly made and well and sufficiently wrought both harde and stronge, and of conuenyent largeness and bignes/ And that euery hatte felts that shalbe from hensforth styched or thrummyd shalbe sufficiently styched and thrummyd aswell on the inner borders as on the utter parte/ and w^{t} goode and unyforme stuffe, uppon suche peyne as hereafter folowith in this present Acte/

And be it also inacted by auctoryte aforeseide that aswell euery hatte felte whiche in forme aforeseide hereafter shalbe thrummyed as also the yerne wher w^{t} any felt shalbe thrummyd of what colour so euer yt shalbe, shalbe well and sufficiently dyed w^{t}oute fraude, gyle, or deceipte before or after the felte shalbe thrummyd uppon peyne that euery person makyng or dyeng or causing to be made or dyed and hatte or hat felte contrary to this acte shall forfet for euery hatte so made or dyed viii^{d} sterlinges the oon half of suche forfet to be to the use of the Meyer of the seide Cyte for the tyme being and the other half therof to the use of the wardeyns of the seide ffellowship whiche forfeture after the same fault or faultes shalbe founde and presentyd by the seide wardeyns and vj other artificers of the seide occupacion or more or ffewer by the discrecion of the maier etc in maner and forme as hereafter in this acte ys set forth and declarid, shalbe levied by distrese to be taken by the officer of the Meyer of the seide Cyte for the tyme being of the goods and

catallys of ther offender and offenders And yf the same offender or offenders do not pay the seide somme or sommes of mony so to be forfetyd, w^{t}in xiiij dayes next after the seide fault be founde by verdyt as hereafter ys expressed that then the same distresse shalbe apprised by vj indeferent persons to be thereunto namyd by the seide meyer for the tyme being and before hym to be sworne for the trew apprysyng of the same, whiche distresse when yt is so prised shalbe solde by the wardeyns of the seide occupacion, and the seide penalty and forfeyt shalbe taken of the pryse of the seide distres and dyuided as ys aforeseide And yf yt shall fortune the price and value of the seide distresse or distresses as they shalbe in forme aforeseide apprised, to amount and comme to more money than the seide penalty so forfeytid, that then the overplus of value and prise of the same distresse or distresses (the seide penalty forfeytid being deducte) shall remayne in the handes of the seide Meyer for the tyme being to the use of the offender of whom the seide distresse or distresses shalbe taken and ther hym to be paide uppon a desire and request therof made to the seid Meyer for the tyme being *And* be yt further inactyd by auctorite aforeseide that euery artificer of the seide occupacion excepte jorneymen and prentyses whiche shall worke to the use of their Maisters shall sette or cause to be sette his particuler marke w^{t} a bronde of Iron uppon euery hatte felt and hatte made by hym self or by any other person to his use immedyatly after euery suche felte or hatte be fully wrought and fynysshed uppon peyne to forfeyt all and euery hatte feltes or hattes not marked in forme aforeseide the oon half of the same hattes so

forfeyted to be to the use of the seide Meyer for the tyme being and the other half to the use of the wardeyns of the seide occupacion.

And be yt also inactyd by Auctoryte aforeseide that no person of the seide occupacion uppon lyke payne to be leuyed and denyded as ys aforeseide shall use or counterfeit any other persons marke of the seide occupacion and sette the same uppon any hattes or feltes but shall only use his owne marke.

Also that no person or persons nether jorneymen or apprentyses shall from hensforth exercise or occupie nor cause to be exercysed or occupied to ther use the seide occupacion of hattys makyng w^t^in the seide Cyte or suburbys of the same onles the same person and persons shall fyrst comme to the Mayer of the Cyte and Wardeyns of the seide occupacion for the tyme being and declare unto them that he is myndyd to exercise and occupie the same occupacion w^t^in the seide Cyte or suburbys of the same Wheruppon the seide Wardeyns for the tyme being w^t^in ij or iij dayes next after suche declaracion and knowlege to them given by the commandement of the seid Meyer shall calle to them two or thre perfyte artyfycers of the seide occupacion and in their presens shall cause the seide person and persons whiche shalbe so mynded to exercyse and occupie the seide occupacion/ to worke and make thre hatte feltez of iij sundry facons w^t^oute helpe or counsell of any person or persons from the begynnyng to the ende and fynisshyng therof and that the same Wardeyns and the seide ij or iij other persons of the seide occupacion so by them to be callyd shall personally se the seide person and persons (so

mynded to exercise and occupie the seide occupacion) work and fully fynisshe the seide hatte feltez so to hym by the seide wardeyns assigned to be made and that neyther the seide wardeyns not eyther of them nor any of the seide persons by them willyd to se the workemanship and making of the seide hatte feltez shall departe before the full makying and fynisshyng therof/ uppon peyne that eyther of the seide wardeyns so departing shall lose and forfeyt xl^{l} and that euery of the seide other persons so departyng or refusing to comme at the calling of the seide wardeyns shall forfeyt xx^{l} to be levied and dyuided in maner and forme and to the uses before declaryd.

And if uppon the working and making of the seid hattez so assigned to be made by the seid wardeyns yt shall appere to the same wardeyns and the seid other persons by them callyd to the same that the seide person or persons so working and makyng the seide hattez in their presens ys at that tyme a goods and perfyte artificer in the seide occupacion then the seid wardeyns for the tyme being shall wryght the name of the seide person whose conyng and workemanship they shall haue so tryed and allowed into the boke of the seide occupacion w^{t} the marke and markes whiche the same person and persons shall then make, and whiche he or they wyll use to sette on the hattes and feltys by hym or them to be made And then immedyatly the seide wardeyns and the seide other persons by them callyd w^{t} the seide person whose workemanship they shall have so tried and allowed shall go to the meyer of the seide Cyte and declare to hym that they have tried and allowed the workemanship of the said person or persons whom they shall so present

to ther seide meyer Wheruppon the seide meyer for the tyme being and iij justices of peace of the seide Cyte by their discrecion shall admytte the seid person so tried and allowed to exercise and occupie the seide occupacion w^t^in the seide Cyte and suburbes of the same Uppon whiche admittance the seide person admytted shall paye to euery of the seide wardeyns for his admitting and to the commen use of the fellowship of the seide occupacion And that euery person whiche shall occupie the seide occupacion w^t^in the seide Cyte or suburbes of the same not being tryd allowed and admytted in forme aforeseid shall forfeyt xl^s^ sterlinges to be levied and dyuided maner and forme above remenbrid

And yt is further inacted by auctorite aforeseid that no person of the seide occupacion inhabytyng wtin the seide Cyte or suburbes of the same/ shall suffer any woman or mayde to worke or make any maner of hatte felt upon peyne to forfeyt for euery felt so made or begune to be made by any woman or mayde vj^s^ viij^d^ to be levied and dyuided in suche maner and forme as ys before declarid *And* be yt also inacted by auctoryte aforeseide that no person or persons of the seid occupacion of hattes makyng, inhabyting w^t^in the seide Cyte or suburbes shall from hensforth exercise or occupie nor cause to be exercysed nor occupied the seide occupacion of makyng of hattys of ffelttes in any place, but only w^t^in the seide Cyte or suburbes And that euery suche person doing contrary to this Artycle shall forfeyt xl^s^ sterlinges as often as he shall do contrary to this acte the same forfeture to be levied and dyuided in maner and forme as ys before rehersed And for lak of a sufficient distres to be

taken as ys aforeseide then the seid offendor to suffer imprisonment in the Guylde Hall of the seide Cyte for the tyme being w^{t}oute bayle or maynprise by the discrecion of the seid meyer and iij justices of peas of the seide Cyte.

And yt is further inactyd by auctorite aforeseide that the wardeyns or wardeyn of the seid occupation w^{t}in the seide Cyte for the tyme being shall haue full power and lawfull Auctoryte to entre into every shoppe workhowse & euery other houses w^{t}in ther seide Cyte & suburbs of the same wher any hattes shalbe made, or in the making or be to be solde/ And ther to make, or in the making to be solde/ And there to make serche for the insufficient working/ makyng and dyeing of any hattys and feltes and for all insufficient stuffe perparyd for the making of hattys oons in euery weke of oftener yf they shall thynk expedient. And that all and euery person and persons of the seide Cyte of suburbs/ upon demands or request to them or any of them made by the seid wardeyns or eyther of them for the syght of the seide hattefeltes/ hattys and stuffe as the same person or persons so required or demanded shall then have in howse or shoppe redy made or preparyd to be made/ And that the seid wardeyns or oon of them at euery suche serche, shall settle the commen marke or token of the seide occupacion upon euery hatte and hattefelt whiche shalbe by them allowed to be goods and sufficient/ And the owner or owners of the hattes or hatte feltes so to be tokenid of markyd shall paye to the seid wardeyns or oon of them for their labours therein/ for euery Grosse hatte feltes or hattes so to be tokenyd iiij^{d} sterling/ And if the owner or owners of the same hattes or feltes so to be tokenyd wyll not paye the seide iiij^{d} for the

tokenyng of euery grosse of the same, then the person or persons so refusing or denying to paye shall haue and indure imprisonment by the commandement of the seid Meyer for the tyme being tyll the same person or persons shall haue paide to the seid wardeyns or oon of them their seide stypende and duty for tokenyng of his or their hattys or feltes/ And that also the seid wardeyns for the tyme being and eyther of them shall haue full power and Auctorite to take and cary aweye all suche feltys and hattes and stuff as they shall fynde defectyue, or in any wyse wrought contrary to the ordenaunce and forme before rehersed/ And to bring the same feltes, hattys and stuff to the guylde hall of the seide Cyte/ And that at the Court of the meyer of the same Cyte ther to be holden next after suche serche the seid wardeyns or wardeyn shall present the seid feltes hattys and stuffe so by them or hym founds defectyue to the seide Meyer for the tyme being and to Th alderman of the seide Cyte/ And that the seid wardeyns or wardeyn for the tyme being shall also cause syx artificers of the seide occupacion inhabiting w^t^in the seide Cyte or the suburbs of the same at the leest, or more by the discrecion of ther seide meyer to appere before the same Meyer and Aldermen at the same Court ther to inquire of the defaultes of the seid hattys feltes and stuffe. And that the seid Meyer for the tyme being upon the apperance of the seide wardeyns or wardeyn and the sayde syx other persons of the seide occupacion or more shall then and there in owpen Court cause the same wardeyns or wardeyn and syx other persons or more or ffewer by the discresion of the Maier to swere before hym well and truly to inquire of the faultes and insufficient making and working of the seide hattys feltes and

stuffe and truly to present the same faultes and euery of them w the namys of ther offenders in the same/ at a certeyn day by him to be assigned/ whiche wardeyns or wardeyn and syx persons or more or ffewer as is aforeseid so being sworne shall truly inquire of the seide faultes and offenders and present the same accordingly at the day to them assigned by the seid Meyer

And upon their presentment and verdyd made All suche hattys feltes and stuffe as shalbe founde defectyue or insufficient that ys to wyte made or mixed w^{t} any other stuffe then estriche wolle only/ or w^{t} estriche wolle sand englysshe wolle sufficient mixed together or made w sterche or syse/ or not sufficiently thrummyd in manner and forme before rehersed shalbe forfetyd and putte and conuertid to suche usez as by the seide meyer for the tyme being and the more parte of the Aldermen of the seid Cyte shalbe adiugyd and thought expedient

And y^{t} now yf any person or persons of the seide occupacion inhabytyng w^{t}in the seide Cyte or suburbs of the same, shall in any wyse interupte or lette the seide wardeyns or eyther of them to serche in theyr shoppes workehowses & all other houses for the seid hattys feltes ands stuff insufficiently made and wrought that then all and euery suche person and persons so lettying or interrupting the seid wardeyns or eyther of them in makying of their seid serche shall forfeyt for euery tyme so offending xl^{s} sterlinges to be levied and dyuided as ys aforeseid/ And yf any of the seide persons of the seid occupacion whiche shalbe callyd by the seide wardeyns or wardeyn to appere

before the seid Meyer for the tyme being at the Guylde Halle aforeseide for the inquysicion and presentment of the seide faultes shall refuse or make default and not appere before the seide Meyer upon the seide request made by the seide wardeyns or eyther of them Or yf they or any of them do appere before the seide Meyer/ and refuse to swere to inquire of the seide faultes in maner and forme aboue remembryd or after they shalbe so sworne shall make default in makyng of their verdit and presentment at the day to them in forme aforeseide to be given/ then euery suche person so refusing or makyng default shall forfeyt for euery suche refusell or default xx^{s} sterlinges as often as he shall so refuse or make default/ the same forfeture to be levied by wey of distres and dyuided in maner and forme before declaryd/ And yf the seid wardeyns or eyther of them shall not make the seide serche euery weke oons at the lest, or shall make default in calling the seide syx persons or more to and for the makyng of the seide inquysicion, or shall make default in makyng of their presentment or verdyt of the seide faultes/ that then euery wardeyn so making default in any of the same poyntes or causes shall forfeyt for euery default vi^{s} viii^{d}/ And yf the seide wardeyns or any of them shall sette the commen marke or token of the seide occupacion upon any hatte felt or hatte not being sufficiently made and wrought according to the forme before declaryd/ or shall not take and bring to the Guylde Halle of the seide Cyte suche insufficient hatt feltes hattys and stuffe as they shall fynde defectyue in any of their serches, then the seide wardeyns shall forfeyt for euery felt and hatte so tokenyd w^{t} the makers or offenders marke and not being sufficient xij^{d}/ and euery default of not bryngyng of the seide hattys feltes and stuffe so

by them to be founde defectyue to the guylde Hall in forme before declaryd xl^{d} the oon half of euery of the same forfetures to be to the seide Meyer for the tyme being, and the other half to the use of the Commonalty of the said Cyte & levied in fforme aforeseid.

And be yt also inactyd by Auctoryte aforeseide that no person or persons of the seide occupacion inhabyting w^{t}in the seide Cyte or suburbs of the same, by hym self nor by any other for hym, shall procure or intyce any seruant or jorneyman of the seid occupacion, oute of the seruice of any artificer of the seid occupacion inhabyting w^{t}in the seid Cyte or suburbs/ by gyvyng or promysyng any greater or more wagis gyft or rewarde/ other then the same seruant or jorneyman hath before couenaunted w^{t} his maister w^{t} whom he then workyth/ nor by any other means upon peyne to forfeyt xl^{s} for euery jorneyman or seruant so procuryd or intysed oute of the seruice of any artificer of the seid occupacion/ the oon half of suche forfeture to be to the Meyer of the seid Cyte for the tyme being/ and the other half thereof to be to the use of the Commonalty of the same Cyte/ and the same forfeyt to be levied in maner and forme before rehersyd

And yt is further inacted by auctorite aforeseide that the seid wardeyns shall calle all the Artificers of the same occupacion inhabyting w^{t}in the seide Cyte or suburbs, to assemble together at the commen halle of the same Cyte when and as often as the same wardeyns shall thynk expedient. At whiche calling euery artificer aforeseide shall comme to the seide commen halle/ at the tyme

and tymes assigned by the seide wardeyns and ther w^{t} the same wardeyns shall talke and commen of suche thinges concerning the seide as haue need to be commenyd amonge them/ At whiche assemble as well as the seide wardeyns and eyther of them/ as also euery artificer of the seide occupacion shall peasybly and quietly behave them selfes and talke of suche things as they shall haue then to talke of/ w^{t}oute steryng or provoking any stryfe or contencion either by worde or any other mysdemenor/ upon peyne that euery person being warenyd as ys aforeseid and makyng default in commyng to any of the seid Assembles w^{t}oute a reasonable excuse or licence of the seid wardeyns shall forfeyt for euery suche default xij^{d} and that euery person procuring or steryng any stryfe or contencion in any of the seide assembles shall forfeyt for euery suche fault xl^{d} the oon half of the said forfeturez to be to the seid Meyer for the tyme being/ and the other half thereof to be to the use of the Commynalty of the seide Cyte/ and the same to be levied by distres as ys aforeseide.

And yt ys further inacted by Auctoryte aforeseid that the Meyer of the seide Cyte for the tyme being when and as often as he shall thynke expedient shall cause the wardeyns of the seid occupacion to commande vi or more persons of the same occupacion being howse holders inhabyting w^{t}in the said Cyte or suburbes/ to appere before hym in the court of meieralty of the seid Cyte at suche day as by the same Meyer shalbe assigned, at whiche court the same vi or more persons shalbe sworne trewly to inquire of the defaultes of the seid wardeyns and of all other persons of the seid occupacion inhabyting w^{t}in the

seide Cyte or suburbes/ comytted doon or omitted contrary to the statutes and ordenaunces before rehersed or contrary to any clause or article in them or any of them conteynid, and truly to present the same at a day to them assigned by the seid Meyer/ After the presentment of whiche faultes the seid Meyer shall cause oon of his offecers to distreyne the offenders so presentyd and euery of them by their goods and cattalys for suche forfetures and penaltyes as be before namys and putte for euery fault before expressed/ the same distresses and penaltyes to be orderyd and dyuided in maner and forme as ys before sette forth and declarid/ And yf the same persons so commanded to appere or any of them assigned or refuse to swere in forme aforeseid or make default in makyng of their verdyt and presentment of & upon the premisses at the day to them assigned/ then euery suche person so refusing or making default, shall forfeyt for euery suche default or refusell provyd by the othes of two lawfull wytnes before the seide meyer for the tyme being in his Court of Meyeralty xx^{d} the oon half of the same forfeture to be to the use of the Commynalty of the seid Cyte/ and the same to be levied by distres in maner and forme before rehersed/ M^{d} that ffynes and forfettes to be abated and increased by the Mayo^{r} and twoo Justyces of peace.

Item that the wardens upon request to them made by any hatmaker, shall goo to the house of the same hatmaker w^{t}in the Cittie every tuisday and fryday and then and there signe and marke w^{t} the commen marke all the feltes and hattes I maner and forme aforeseide made then and there brought to the same wardens.

Item that noon of the seide occupacion shall sell any apprentyse to any person or persones other then to suche that he of the seide occupacion admytted as is aforeseide uppon the payne to forfette for euery suche offence iiij^{li} the one half to the Mayo^{r} for the tyme being and the other to the use of the Cittie to be levied by emprysonemente or otherwise by the dyscrecion of the Mayo^{r}.

And also that any of the seide occupacion shall not haue at any time hereafter above the number of three apprentises uppon payne to forfeyte for euery offence iiij^{li} don contrary to the Artycle to be levied and devyded as is nexte aforewrytten Item that any of the seide occupacion shall not teache any poynte mattier or anything ellis concerning the same occupacion to any person or persones ether then the apprentyse of the same person or persons uppon payne nexte aforeseide.

Appendix 8: The marks and names of the hat-makers of Norwich, 1543[1]

19 September 1543

(by column)

1 Richard Thomson

2 Robert Hendry

3 Thomas Payne

4 William Bryant

5 Edmund Sellers

6 John Berverley

7 Wylliam Wetecars

8 Richard Marrye

9 Rauf Sutton

10 George Drory

11 John Rebell

12 John Rowland

13 Harry Holand (cancelled)

14 Jamys Leche

[1] Norfolk Record Office, Norwich Court Book, No. CCCCLV.

Appendix 9: Bristol's feltmakers and haberdashers, 1595-1600[1]

John Atkins
George Batten
Richard Bingham
Thomas Brook
William Brown
Richard Burgess
John Burgess
Sampson Burgess
William Burgess
Robert Cooper
William Culverhouse
John Crump
Thomas Daniel(l)
George Davis
Walter Davis
Richard Dawson
Henry Dawson
Anthony Elliott
Humphrey Ellis
Jesse Elms
Thomas Firkis
Giles Godwin
George Griffith
Edward Hatfell
Thomas Holbeck
Richard Holland
John Hook
William Hunt
Thomas Hunt
Thomas Hurtnall
John Jones
Richard Jones
James King
Walter Lyppett
John Lyppett
Richard Lyttell
Adam Miller
Robert Newes
George Newman
Francis Nicholas
John Nicholas
Thomas Perry
Richard Peter
John Pinken
Richard Pitter
Edward Powell
William Pufford
William Rysam
Edmund Rumney
William Spratt
Nicholas Stacy
William Stratford
William Swetnam
Richard Tyson
William Warden
Richard Warkman
William Wells
William West
William Wilcox
Stephen Wills

[1] BRO, 08156/1.

Appendix 10: First parish mention of Winterbourne's hatting families

(This list was drawn from records, covering births, marriages and deaths, 1600-1890, that were downloaded in transcription in 2011 from twenty files at *www.frenchaymuseumarchives.co.uk.*)

Bailey	1601	Holder	1651	Rothary	1739
Williams	1601	Curtis	1654	Walton	1739
Ricketts	1602	Barnes	1657	Bisp	1743
Prigg	1603	Osborne	1658	Kethro	1743
Rodman	1604	Merrick	1661	Maby	1744
Mills	1608	Parker	1667	Woodruff	1747
Smith	1608	Anstie	1668	Pullen	1749
Collins	1610	England	1675	James	1751
Cook	1613	King	1678	Drew	1755
Edwards	1613	Dixon	1685	Stockden	1763
Griffith	1613	Hibbs	1688	Ivory	1768
Hollister	1615	Roach	1688	Flook	1782
Turner	1615	Maggs	1694	Pinnell	1782
Webb	1615	Pritchard	1706	Skidmore	1792
Dooding	1618	Allsop	1709	Howes	1805
Amos	1619	Bishop	1709	Rowland	1806
Butler	1625	Champion	1709	Spill	1807
Tanner	1628	Gough	1709	Knight	1808
Evans	1632	Harcombe	1721	Garlick	1818
Ellery	1635	Harding	1723	Clegg	1830
Luton	1639	Lowe	1724	Sollis	1833
Simmonds	1639	Wright	1729	Mann	1835
Hobbs	1641	Sargent	1730	Preston	1835
Hawkins	1650	Mursily	1738		

Appendix 11: Probate Inventory of Thomas Dawes, 1687[1]

Available on thesis 'Excel (.xlsx) file'.

The inventory of all and singular the good chattels, rights and codicils [*] late of the city of Bristol, haberdasher of hats [*] taken and appraised this fourteenth of February 1686/7 by Richard Payne and John Estwick both of the city of Bristol [*] haberdashers of hats as follows: [*continued on Excel file*].

[1] TNA, PROB 4/18051.

Appendix 12: The way of making felts, Robert Hooke, 1666[1]

Square brackets contain Hooke's corrections, as [insert], unless otherwise stated, usually as deletions, as [deleted: xxx].
Letters and numbers in brackets refer to drawings on Hooke's illustration.

[p 96b] The Felt [*deleted:* mongers] makers buy [all] their wooll from the glovers, who pull it off from their sheepskins It is a shorter & finer wool than that which is shorne [being only that which [*deleted:* grows between] is pull oft from the Skins of Sheep kild between sheer time and michaelmas and is a soft & bright wooll] and therefore most fitt for their use because w^{t} is shorne is of a longer groth & so has a greater length and discourser [they make use also of fine lambs wool shorne as also of the best Spanish woole & of red wool and goat hair which is call[ed] camels hair] their sheeps wooll they putt into [boyling] chamber ly & water [half water half ly] and suffer it to soak for ¼ howre then they pamp it and beat it well to & fro wth the end of a bord or a space till they have scowred out all the dirt and grease then they wash it well wth their hands in a river till the wooll becomes very cleane & white [thus they order also all their spanish wool and camels wool] after which they wring it well & lay it forth in some clean place – to dry [their lambs wool they wash only in hott water and sope till they hang very well & thoroughly sco[wered]] after this they give it to the carders who w^{t} sm[all Cards] (such as they make locks [with and repare their wooll] for spinning) all over break it and open and card [it into] light & cleer locks, these locks they dry very well, then they tae about a dozen or more of them & place them confusedly upon their bord (which is shott wth many small nimselus [?] that the dust may fall through [and is therefore caled a

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[1] Robert Hooke, *Lecture to the Royal Society*, February 1666 (Royal Society, GB 117 Classified Papers XX, 3).

Hurdle) just under the bow. Then the operator taking hold of his bow [*deleted:* string] wth his left hand and holding his bowstick wth his right he pulls his bowstring and let it strike into the heap of locks which quickly tears, opens, mingles and [as it were] frothes [?] the woole, after they have thus severall times struck in the bowstring through the middle of it then they [*illegible*] held their bow [*illegible*] soe that the string being struck or lett goe may [with the end of its vibrating motion] just touch the surface[e] or outsides of the opend wooll, the manner of this motion of the bowstring is this, wth their left hand they hold fast the bow [*insert deleted*] and suffer the smaller [or farther] end of it to rest lightly on the top of the wooll then wth the bowstick in the right hand they draw the string downwards till the string of itself slips off from the round end of the bowstick, as it slips off they soe terne the bow wth their left hand that the string may move a little upward & soe strik up the wooll & make it fly like flakes of snow or froth, or like small down feathers, and this motion of their hand is helped by the small string, one end of wch is fastned to the Seeling the other to the bow for such a manner that only leaning hard on the bow [*deleted:* ...ngstick] will make the [bow] string rise upwards at least the bow if soe conterpay'd thereby, that [the] hand can very easily hold it in any posture or move it in any manner requesite, thus does the artist continue striking this string till he have raisd a sufficient quantity of this downy wooll, to make a heap big enough to make a batt [as they terme it] or flake of wooll which serves afterwards to make the felt for the hatt. A hatt therefore is a heap of this frothy or Downy wooll whose edges are shapd after a peculiar manner by the hands as it lyes in froth and then batted or prest downe wth the hands for as to make it

ly somew^{t} cloaser together, the hight of the heap [in the middle] before they press it downe wth their hands is usually about 10 or 12 inches [*deleted:* high] above the board, but after it is batted downe wth the hands it is usually about 2 or 3. Of these for every ordinary hatt they usually make 12 which they thus terme, the four first they lay they call the [deleted: wrong] right side or outside batts. two of them are brimbatts [outside or bordering batts, outside] & two crown batts the next four they putt on they call middle batts [these are much thicker then the side batt because two of the ... lye one upon another but these lye single] that is two middle brimbatts & two middle crown batts, [*deleted:* last of all] the [laste] foure they putt on they call the wrongside batts that is two wrongside brimbatts & two wrongside crown batts. the manner of the putting on of all w^{ch} is thus – They, having plac'd a pan of coles under their bason & soe brought it to a convenient heat Lay on it a peice of canvass about an ell square [which they call a beforming [?] cloth] and moisten it wth a litle fair water which stands by them in a pott wth a small bough in it [*word deleted*] with which they take up the water & sprinkle the cloth; having spread the cloth they lay on the first outside brim batt upon that part of the cloth w^{ch} is over the bason & sprinkling it wth a little water they lay on also the 1st outside crown batt, and soe wth their han[rest of line lost]

[p 96d] batt & press them well together, then they place or spread upon the top of these their inlayer or inlaying canvass made of the fashion represented in the figure [*in left margin: Fig 2*] and batt them a while together over the bason, then they fold or tame [?] up all the sides or edges of the batts that ly beyond

the edges of the inlaying cloth & then place on the 2^{d} [outside] crown batt, sprinkling it a little & batting or pressing it downe wth their hands, then place on the 2^{d} outside brimbatt and wth both hands they nimbly turne that side undermost then turne up the edges over the former batts & press them all over gently wth their hands, then as it lyes smooth in this posture they lay [or fold the … of] the cloth smoo[th] all over it & wrap it up, & fold it two or 3 times over & for sprinkling it wth a litle water they press it and rowle it to & fro under their hands upon the bason a pretty while till it be pretty well setled together then they unfold off their ca[n]vas & opening the felt, wth their hands they peep under [& look through it] to see if there be any part extraordinarily more thinn then the rest & this they stop & thicken wth small locks of wooll, bowstri[n]g'd in the same manner as the batts, this they call stopping, and the wooll they call stopping wooll. when they have thus pretty well stopt the holes [and thickened the thinner parts] they gently wth one hand lifting up the upper half of y^{e} felt wth the other take out the middle cloth and turne the felt soe that the edges [or folds] may now lye in the middle & the middle they fold & mak[e] to ly on the edges. then [Raising againe put in their Inlayer to keep it from sticking together] they place upon the top of these the 4 midde batts in the same manner as they did the 4 first, and wrapping them up in their [basoning] canvas as before they sprinkle rowle & press them as before [*word cancelled*] and thus work them to & fro a pretty while [on their hott bason till the parts [?] of the wooll] begin to penetrate each other & to stick together, after this they open them & [*deleted:* taking out the …] lifting up the sides & peeping as before they stop all the thin places wth their stopping wool, then they take out their middle

cloth as before, & turne it as before, [that is lay the folds of the felt in the middle and fold the last or midde batts just through ye midd...] & lay on the 4 last batts calld the wrongside batts in the same manner as they did the 4 middle ones, and order them in the same manner wrapting [?], sprinkling, pressing, rowling, turning, peeping, & stopping, till they have made it stick fast together and work or shrink into one another and thus they continue basoning of the felt till they have wrought it pretty well together and that it have a pretty smooth surface and a pretty close consistence [or texture] which usually holds them about 3 hours time, when that is done they roule them [or fold them] up & soe tye them [wth strings] in a readiness for boyling. thus they continue making their felts till they have a sufficient number of them to fill their furnace, then they fill their furnace half wth wine or chamber lye & half wth water, and putt in all their felts together & soe keep them boyling in this liquor for the space of 6 or 8 hours [or more] till they be sufficiently prepard & ... together softned [as they say] Then they take them out and open them & lay them to dry a litle.

Then they fill their furnace [*illegible deletion*] allmost full with water & putt into it about a 10th or 12 part of winelees & Cause it to boyle and cease [?] then they throw in a felt they are going to work till it be thorough hott & soakd then they take it out & work it on their plank [*in margin:* Fig. 3^{d}] [*word deleted*] working [?] and rowling it to and fro under their hands till they have wrought ... ... together & shrunk it into about a quarter of the first biggness which operation usually holds them 3, 4 or 5 howres according as they would make the hatt better or worse the manner of w^{ch} laborious operation is thus.

They first putt on upon both hands a pair of cuffes [or soles] which are two flat peices of felt about [*deleted:* the] 5 inches broad & 8 or 9 in leng these lye next to the [palmes of their] hands and each of these are fastned a double sole [?] of a shoe soe as to make them thick & first these they fasten onto the palmes of their hand tying the uper part onto their arm by a waist band & the fore end wth a small band about their middle finger (as may be more plainly seen by the figure) [*in left margin:* Fig. 4th] being thus cuffd they lay the felt on the plank & taking out some of their hott lees they throw it on their felt and folding some part of it under their hand they roule it & press it with their [*deleted:* hands] [cuffs or soles] continuing to work every part of it thus till they have shrunk it well this they call waksing of a felt. if any part of it does shrink faster than the rest they roule that part about their workepin & soe rowling it under their hands they sretch it out and make it strech as far as it ought this they help also twistd [?] something wth their hands thus they

[p96f] [p96g is a duplicate of this] continue working or waking of it for 3 or 4 howres and as their liquor wasts they putt in more lees which does a litle promote the shrink [ing] And if they should putt in too much lees at first the hatt would when they [too fast] the have thus workt their felt in lees [till they have made it of a convenient bigness] they take their place of wt fashion they please and ... a little braking in the crowne for that the felt will stand like a dish they take a pott of hott leese out of ye furnace & fill it letting it strand till it be well soakd & sotfned then they throw out all the lees & sett their block on the plank & wth their hands they straine on the felt upon the block, [*word deleted*] and

wth their [*word deleted*] stamping iron they scrape or shove out the lees out of that part of the felt which is about the block, then wth a pumice stone & cold water they take [or rubb] off all the rough part or Grapp from the crowne and then wash oft all the shavings wth their hott lees and wth their stamping iron rubb or squeez it clean out againe then they take a mixture of wheating [*word deleted*] flower & water [which is for the stifning of the crowne] & with it they wash over all the crowne [if they intend their hat to be black they, instead of this flower, make use of past [?] or beaze [?] lees and rubb it ... in the same manner] & then slip it oft from the block, turne it and draw it on upon the block wth the inside outwards, and wth their stamping iron they indeavour to make it fit close to the block, [after] which they take a string [a a] & fasten it about their felt [*deleted:* in the manner repast in the figure] this [strink] is their stamping iron [x x] they drive downewards as far as they can and if the string be too straight, & soe cannot be drawne downe to the bottom they loosen the strink & tye it somewt slacker and then beat it quite home that is as low as they can then filling all the brimmes wth their hott lees [*above the line:* (which will turne & ...stand up like a dish)] they wth their hands indeavour by degrees to strech the edges of the brimmes soe as to make them ly smooth upon the plank [they use also a Dish which they turne upside downwards and wth the brims of it they indeavour to rub ye brims flat] and as the liquor cools they press it out with the eidge of their stamping iron [then they putt on hott appesh [?] & work as before & rub it clean out wth their strings [?]], they then continue to doe till they have recuced the brims to lye flatt upon the plank, after this they rubb them smooth wth a peice of pumice stone, if they intend smooth hatts, or card out

the nap or shag if they intend rough, and soe suffer them to stand and dry. after this they putt them into an oven out of wch bread has been drawne, and there they shutt them up & suffer them to stand for 10 or 12 hours till quite dry & stiff But if they make black or any other extraordinary colourd hatts they [first cutt the brims round as they ought to be otherwise the brims will cutt white at the middle and be ...some then] putt them as they are [taken from the place tyed fast on the block] into the furnace block & all, & soe suffer them to boyle & sok – for 8 or ten howres till they are sufficiently dyed, after which they suffer them to dry and then bake them as the other.

After this [for the stifning of y^{e} brims] they take common glue & wth water boyle it to a kind of siz – making it somew^{t} thicker then common siz – but much thinner then joiners glue, then taking a peice of soft felt or spung they dip it in this size & therewth they rubb all the under sides of the brims of the hatt till they have made it very wett but they doe not lay on soe much as will wett the brims quite through because that would make it look il favourd & greasy. when they have thus wett or sized all the under sides they hold the brims on the top of a block [which they call a fryer] with the sized sides upwards & wth a [wooden] mallett they mall or beat in all the size till it quite disappears ['(see fig. Z.' at this place] [if the under side be napped wth goates hair they wth a cloth rub it very clean & dry before they stiffen & smooth y^{e} brims on the bason ['(I believe it should be ye fryer')] otherwise their nap will stick together & when they are to open it it will tare] then they put it on againe upon the block ['or fryer &c'] & tye on the string very hard and stamp it down close w^{t} their stamping iron, and if

any of the glue appears through on the upside they rubb it quite drye w^{t} a cloth just as they always doe the Nap under neath the brims and as they doe also a rough hatt if they [would] leave a shagg.

Then they carry it to their bason (w^{ch} is heated by a pan of coales underneath till it be about the heat of a smoothing iron soe as it may not burne the paper or hatt) and spreading a broad sheet of brown paper on the bason they sett the hatt upon it. then they sett severall blocks upon the brims soe as to keep them flatt down to the bason and they continue turning them round till the hatt be quite dry & stift [which will keep [?] about ¼ pt of an houre or less –] at first they sett on 6 blocks after a while take off one, a little after anoth[er] and by degrees a 3d. continuing still to turne round the blocks upon the brims that the steam may gett [?] away and the surface of the hatt may be the better smoothe this they continue to doe moving the blocks always one way till they have finisht. then wth a stiff brush – (A)

[p96c] [*in left margin, an 'A' with horns*] wth a stift brush they take off all the dust of the pumice or dyewood, beating and brashing it very cleare, And to sett a glosse upon their black hatts they take Indico, galls, copperas & shomac, and dissolve them in water, & wth a coarse peice of felt dipt in this liquor in wch also there is putt a litle gum they Rub over all the surface of the hatt laying the haire or nap as it ought to be and soe suffer it to dry. this will make it look very fine & smooth & glossy [and black], but if they intend their hatt smooth [*deleted:* befor] after the hatt be dry tey kindle a handful or two of straw & hold the hatt

over the flame of it & thereby burne or singe off all the loose or flaring haires after they rubb it well wth their blacking or glossing wth a peice of felt & soe sett it up for sale. after this they string [or band] it, line it, & edge it &c of wch afterwards.

[Deleted: NB thus far Dr Hook, who breakes of here nor do I find he ever wrote any ...] [space]

what generall observations [also] and instructions may be hence drawn for the promoting of Natural knowledg and wt axioms and corollarys for the further prceeding to other experiments I shall not now Insist on but referr them to some other opportunity.

NB thus far Dr Hooke, who breaks off here nor do I find that he ever wrote any more upon this subject. R. W.

Appendix 13: Explanation of Robert Hooke's illustration, 1666[1]
(Figure 18 in the main text.)

Figure 1: ABCD: Table board, about two and a half feet high, about six feet long, and four feet broad) with slats to allow the dust from the wooll to fall through. This is called a hurdle ('from its shape').

DEFG: Bow of fir, about two inches diameter and six of eight feet long tapering from **F** (about a foot deep) to **G** 'not half so much', having a counter bridge **E** and **G** at each end 'over which a gut string, somewhat bigger than a crow's quill, is stretched very stiff'. The bow is suspended enabling the feltmaker to vibrate the bowstring over a pile of opened, or carded, wool.

H: Bow stick, a small, turned stick about eight inches long made of box with a button at the end, to strike the bow, 'thereby saving their fingers and applying the strength of their whole hand'.

Figure 2: K: Basoning table, about three feet broad and fifteen feet long, 'as they please', in which are placed (**LL**) basons, round plates of iron, about eighteen or twenty inches diameter and between half and three-quarters of an inch thick. The table is heated by the pan of charcoals (**OO**) beneath.

MM: Basoning cloth, a piece of coarse canvas about an ell square.

NNNN: Triangular piece of coarse cloth.

P: Earthen pot for cooled water.

Q: Brush or mop to sprinkle cold water.

Figure 3: RS: Making plant where boiling water is applied to the felts. The plank slopes down for the liquor to draw away out of the felt and into (**T**).

WW: Make pin of iron, about twelve inches long.

XXX: Stamping iron.

YYYYY: Blocks, shaped to the required fashion of the crown.

Z: Block, called a fryer, where hats are moulded with a mallet.

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[1] Robert Hooke, *Lecture to the Royal Society*, February 1666 (Royal Society, GB 117 Classified Papers XX, 3).

Appendix 14: Master's oath, 1614[1]

You shall well and truly execute and use the office of master of the company for this year now next ensuing and due search you shall make over sight take of all defaults and in conveyances in the mean time done and committed by any person or persons of your said company and such defaults as you shall find or that shall come to your knowledge for the which any person of your said company shall deserve punishment you shall truly present him or them to this court: and all lawful and good ordinances agreeable with the laws of this realm heretofore granted and accustomed to be kept by your said company you shall well and truly keep and maintain this year to your power as near as God shall give you grace.

So help you God

Bristol, 1614.

[1] BRO, 08156/1, p. 326.

Appendix 15: Hatter wills and probates, 1588-1889

Available on thesis 'Excel (.xlsx) file'.

This file contains a composite list of all of the wills and probates found for 193 haberdashers of hats, hatters and feltmakers from Bristol and South Gloucestershire. As well as a few random finds, the published sources were reviewed for individuals identified by occupation and this was followed by a full search of the archives of wills and probate inventories at the Bristol Record Office, Gloucestershire Archives and The National Archives where occupations were given.[1] Copies of the documents were made and their monies and significant 'wealth' contents – animals, houses, land, work tools and workshops - tabulated.

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[1] E and S George, edited, *Guide to the Probate Inventories of the Bristol Deanery of the Diocese of Bristol (1542-1804)* (BRS and BGAS 1988); *Bristol Probate Inventories*, Part 1 1542-1650, Part 2 1657-1689, Part 3 1690-1804 (BRS, Vol. 54, 2002; Vol. 57, 2005; Vol. 60, 2008). S Lang and M McGregor, *Tudor Wills Proved in Bristol 1546-1603* (BRS, Vol. 44, 1993). J S Moore, edited, *The Goods and Chattels of our Forefathers, 1539-1804,* Frampton Cotterell Local History Group (Chichester, Phillimore 1976).

Appendix 16: Petition, feltmakers of Frampton Cotterell, 1784[1]

That your Petitioners are persons of low situation in Life and for many Years have endeavoured to get Bread for themselves and families in the Manufacturing of Hatts made with Wool Generally in value from Eight Shillings to Sixty Shillings per Dozen

That a tax of sixpence on each of such Hatts will (your Petitioners most Humbly conceive) Utterly Ruin ye Manufactory of such low prised Hatts and subject many Hundreds of Families to become chargeable to their respective Parishes as whole Families Women & Children are frequently employed therein and whose state of Indigence will render it wholly Impossible to raise the necessary Supplies to discharge such intended duty

That the wholesale dealer at the present time Generally take all such Hatts as the Poor Manufacturer can Weekely make and pay Ready money for same which if the intended duty takes place cannot in future be expected as the weight of such Duty will in all Human probability prevent the wholesale Dealer from keeping any material Stock by him and of consequence render it Impossible for the poor Manufacturer to continue his Trade

Your Petitioners therefore most Humbly Pray that a duty of Sixpence intended to be charged on low prised Hatts may not take place And that some other less

[1] Undated, but 1784 (TNA, T 1/610/409-419).

Distressing mode may be adopted either by a Ratable Tax on the value of Hatts or by such other way as in your Great Wisdom shall seem meet

Appendix 17: Apprentice enrolments: Methodology & reservations

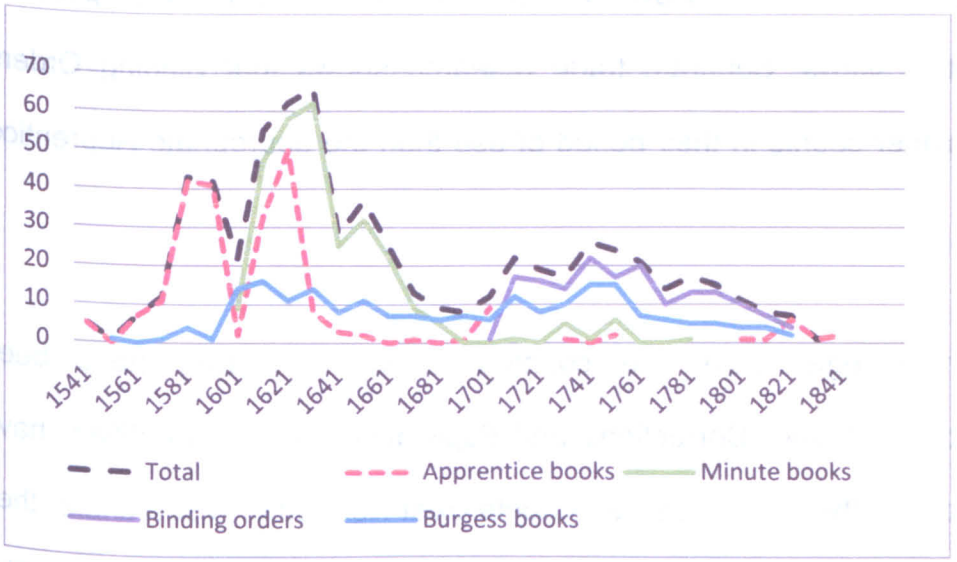

Figure 119: Sources for Bristol feltmaker apprentices by decade.[1]

On the example of the Bristol feltmakers, any attempt to reconstruct a full list of apprenticeships based on just one source will result in significant under-recording. For instance, the original apprentice books produced just over half (51%) of the apprentices in the composite feltmaker list. The Company minute book contains just over a third (36%) of apprentices, but are of little use after 1700 with the decline in the number of feltmaker masters who were Company members. The two earliest falls in the records are most likely caused by the plague and the civil wars.[2]

The graph shows the decennial means of the apprentice registrations of the City of Bristol: there were 60,911 registrations between 1532 and 2008. In

[1] Numbers do not exactly add to the total as apprenticeships gathered from other sources, such as indentures and newspapers, are not given as sub-totals.
[2] Bristol suffered from bubonic plague in 1575, 1603 and 1643-1645 (Keith Wrightson, *English Society, 1580-1680*, London, Hutchinson 1993), pp. 128, 145.

most cases, individual records have been counted, but not transcribed. Source book types are shown to allow for independent assessments of possible source-related skews. Separate trade research shows that Binding Orders contained higher counts in their period of use than the appropriate Apprentice Registers.

All apprentice registrations are counted, even when they have been subsequently cancelled. Corrections and duplications, where identified, have been excluded. Where previous part counts exist from other researchers, they have been compared with the current count; there is seldom unanimity. The current count is almost always higher, never by more than 7%, and has always been preferred. The years of highest difference have been recounted. The records have been calendared to the modern year. The records were made following either or both of the Corporation's year, starting 29 September, and the old English year, starting in April. Where very occasional short runs of months are clearly missing, as opposed to having a zero entry, the decennial mean has been extrapolated. Each undated record has been included in the predominant month of its surrounding records.

The decade of the 1660s is the most problematic and a mean has not been calculated. These years are by far the least complete: only thirty-four months (28%) are available for transcription (1,017 apprentices which extrapolate to a decennial mean of 359). Thirteen of these months come from a suspect rough book in which the records of city apprenticeships are intermingled with the

indentures of plantation servants.[3] The latter have been excluded where the destination is apparent (usually Nevis, Barbados or Virginia) or when the period of service is indicative (three to four years). Normal recording is resumed in April 1668.[4]

[3] Rough book, 1664-1665 (BRO, 04354).
[4] BRO, 04357.

Appendix 18: Feltmaker apprentice enrolments, 1541-1855

Available on thesis 'Excel (.xlsx) file'.

This file contains six worksheets, the first a master file of all 1,212 apprenticeship transactions found for the hatting trades in Bristol and South Gloucestershire. The five other worksheets either supplied the master list or were used for comparisons:

1. Bristol: 1,132 apprenticeship transactions in the city with sources
2. London: 23 apprentices to the hatting trade in London who gave their homes as either Bristol or South Gloucestershire.[1]
3. Gloucester: 243 apprentices to the hatting trade in Gloucester, used for regional comparison.[2]
4. South Gloucestershire: 239 apprentices to the hatting trade in South Gloucestershire, with some additional sources.
5. TNA: 285 apprentices to the hatting trade in the United Kingdom taken from the records of premium tax payments for 1710-1713 and 1760-1806.[3] Those for Bristol and South Gloucestershire were added, where necessary, to the master file; the whole list was used for national comparison,

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[1] Cliff Webb, *London Livery Company Apprenticeship Registers, Vol. 37 of 48, Feltmakers' Company, 1676-1682, 1692-1800,* abstracted and indexed (London, Society of Genealogists Enterprises Limited 2002).

[2] Jill Barlow, edited, *A Calendar of the Registers of Apprentices of the City of Gloucester 1595-1700*, Gloucestershire Record Series, Vol. 14 (BGAS 2001); 1700-1834, Vol. 25 (BGAS 2011).

[3] TNA, IR 1/41-42, 54-72,

Appendix 19: Bristol masters and numbers of their apprentices[1]

Master	Apprentices	No.	First	Last
Underwood	Thomas	1	1849	1849
Withers	John	1	1846	1846
Sturge	John	1	1832	1832
Cook	John Penn	1	1828	1828
Davis	Martin	1	1827	1827
Witchell	Joseph C	1	1821	1821
Ransford	William	1	1820	1820
Heath	Joseph	2	1818	1823
Dowell	John jun	4	1814	1828
Wilkinson	William	3	1812	1826
Bowdich	Thomas	2	1799	1808
Ransford	Thomas	2	1808	1819
Gardiner	Joel jnr	1	1807	1807
Jeffery	Robert	1	1800	1800
Core	Robert	1	1799	1799
Mince	John	1	1799	1799
Bunce	John	1	1798	1798
Ewer	James	2	1793	1800
Ransford	Edward jnr	7	1789	1809
Dussett	William	1	1789	1789
King	George	2	1786	1792
Bazley	James jnr	2	1784	1787
Stonehouse	George	1	1784	1784
Firkis	Thomas	1	1783	1783
Gardiner	Joel	7	1781	1809
Dowell	John	4	1781	1805
Hedges	Thomas	1	1781	1781
Bradley	John	3	1780	1798
Dowell	William	4	1777	1802
Hayward	Philip	1	1776	1776
Heath	Joseph	2	1775	1784
Tustin	John	1	1775	1775
Ricketts	Richard	3	1774	1783
Davis	Samuel	1	1774	1774
Edwards	John	2	1770	1801
Milett	John	3	1761	1769
Hitchens	William	1	1766	1766
Parslow	John	1	1766	1766
Ransford	Edward	6	1760	1784
Player	Jacob	2	1760	1767
Bailey	Isaac	2	1759	1768

[1] Abstracted from Appendix 18: *Feltmaker apprentice enrolments, 1541-1855*. Available on thesis 'Excel (.xlsx) file'.

Owen	Thomas jnr	3	1758	1763
Millett	Stephen	5	1757	1773
Bright	Edward	1	1756	1756
Whittuck	Charles	4	1755	1774
Eames	John	4	1748	1759
Perry	Henry	2	1748	1759
Townsend	Henry	1	1747	1747
Dowell	John	9	1745	1767
Hopkins	Peter	3	1744	1749
Barber	Sampson	2	1744	1747
Jones	Christopher	2	1744	1749
Robinson	Richard	6	1743	1759
Brain	Moses	3	1742	1751
Holbrow	James	2	1740	1754
Bailey	Roger	4	1714	1735
Robinson	William	3	1733	1736
Pontin	John	1	1733	1733
Harding	James	10	1720	1757
Owen	Thomas	3	1726	1743
Britton	Samuel	2	1726	1730
Tyley	Richard	1	1726	1726
Evans	Thomas	5	1722	1744
Watkins	George	2	1714	1722
White	George	1	1722	1722
Evans	John	1	1721	1721
Bailey	Abraham	2	1720	1748
Bale?	John	1	1720	1720
Stokes	Edward	1	1720	1720
White	John	1	1720	1720
Price	Richard	5	1719	1741
Lucas	John	1	1719	1719
Davis	Samuel	5	1718	1745
Dapwell	William	1	1717	1717
Chandler	Samuel	3	1716	1733
Packer	Samuel	3	1709	1721
Davis	Meredith	2	1715	1716
Patch	Joseph	1	1711	1711
Pruett	Thomas	1	1708	1708
Fox	Edward	1	1706	1706
Sandford	Richard	1	1706	1706
Hillhouse	James	1	1704	1704
Lovell	Peter	3	1703	1727
Evans	Thomas	2	1703	1719
Hooper	George	1	1703	1703
Abbott	Edward	4	1701	1713
Davis	Samuel	2	1701	1714
Skreare	Edward	1	1700	1700
Fry	Thomas	2	1697	1697
Redwood	Charles	1	1697	1697
Potter	Robert	2	1687	1691

Hooper	John	2	1686	1691
Hollister	William	1	1680	1680
Nettles	Richard	1	1680	1680
Redwood	George	2	1679	1694
Dawes	Thomas	1	1676	1676
Pym	David	1	1673	1673
Cooper	John	1	1671	1671
Pym	Thomas	1	1670	1670
Pearce	John	1	1669	1669
Roach	Thomas	3	1668	1675
Dowell	John	1	1668	1668
Potter	John	6	1664	1684
Saunders	Thomas	4	1664	1688
Wilson	William	1	1664	1664
West	Richard	3	1663	1677
Horwood	William	2	1661	1668
Redwood	John	1	1656	1656
Fry	William	8	1655	1688
Hulbert	John	5	1655	1669
Hulbert	William	1	1655	1655
Pitt	John	1	1654	1654
Hooper	John	6	1653	1668
Hobbs	Joseph	4	1653	1658
Pearce	William	4	1653	1666
Young	George	1	1653	1653
Fry	Thomas	3	1652	1659
Rowbottom	Edward	1	1650	1650
Newman	Richard	3	1648	1663
Fry	John	6	1647	1661
Moore	Simon	2	1646	1647
Andrews	Jesse	5	1646	1692
Hollister	Thomas	2	1646	1646
Wingrove	Thomas	1	1646	1646
Shepherd	John	4	1636	1646
Redwood	William	6	1640	1665
Tyley	William	2	1639	1645
Merrick	William	3	1637	1660
North	Dudley	1	1637	1637
Hollister	William	5	1636	1680
Slann	John	3	1636	1646
Snow	William	2	1636	1640
Neeve	Francis	1	1635	1635
Tily	William	1	1635	1635
Williams	Walter	1	1635	1635
Attwood	Francis	7	1634	1662
Jones	John	7	1633	1655
Hobbs	James	4	1633	1638
Jones	Philip	3	1632	1646
Trueman	John	2	1632	1633
Bailey	William	1	1632	1632

Newman	George	1	1632	1632
Williams	Roger	1	1632	1632
Bailey	Richard	2	1629	1631
Brook	Thomas	5	1614	1629
Woodward	Gregory	3	1628	1634
Harbert	James	4	1626	1636
Whitaker	Henry	2	1626	1626
Bouner	William	1	1626	1626
Redwood	George	5	1624	1647
Phillips	Blanchadine	2	1624	1627
Blanche	Robert	5	1623	1646
Cadell	John	1	1623	1623
Crapp	Nicholas	7	1622	1632
Nicholls	Robert	4	1622	1641
Pykes	Robert	1	1622	1622
Merrick	Henry	5	1619	1633
Laye	Robert	1	1619	1619
Edwards	George	1	1618	1618
Stacy	Henry	3	1617	1622
Puddy	Richard	5	1616	1630
Wingrove	Thomas	3	1616	1622
Muxery	Alexander	4	1615	1625
Floyd	John	3	1615	1632
Mosley	Nathaniel	1	1615	1615
Brooke	John	3	1614	1627
Lloyd	John	3	1614	1629
Hurtnall	Thomas	8	1613	1639
Burgess	William	11	1612	1636
Taylor	Arthur	5	1612	1641
Jones	Richard	4	1611	1628
Fecknam	Griffith	1	1611	1611
West	John	11	1609	1641
Jones	Robert	6	1609	1620
Hunt	William	1	1609	1609
Perry	Thomas	10	1608	1630
Rumney	Edmund	4	1607	1615
Bridges	Richard	1	1607	1607
Hunt	John	1	1605	1605
West	William	1	1604	1604
Risam	William	1	1602	1602
Burgess	Richard	8	1599	1631
Bingham	Richard	2	1599	1608
Crumpe	John	2	1599	1610
Tyson	Richard	5	1598	1612
Griffin	George	2	1597	1599
Davies	George	10	1595	1607
Atkins	John	4	1594	1598
Cooper	Robert	4	1594	1599
Davies	Walter	1	1594	1594
Pufford	William	10	1591	1628

Stacy	Nicholas	9	1591	1621
Batten	George	4	1590	1613
Baynham	Richard	6	1589	1598
Tyson	John	3	1589	1590
Wilcox	William	3	1589	1593
Burgess	Sampson	4	1588	1595
Lippiet	Walter	3	1588	1598
Davis	George	1	1588	1588
Powell	Edward	1	1588	1588
Bynde	George	1	1586	1586
Burgess	John	8	1584	1613
Cruchington	Ralph	1	1583	1583
Thomas	David	1	1583	1583
Jelly	William	8	1581	1590
Grandfield	Teague	5	1581	1588
Blackbourne	Ralph	3	1581	1583
Jones	David	4	1580	1596
Thorne	Thomas	2	1580	1581
Carne	William	1	1580	1580
Hunt	William	6	1579	1595
Printer	Thomas	3	1572	1580
Boston	Alexander	3	1569	1569
Browne	Robert	3	1569	1573
Kempe	George	6	1560	1578
Mills	Henry	4	1546	1547

Appendix 20: Vow of apprentice feltmakers[1]

You shall constantly and devoutly every Day Morning and Evening on your knees, serve God, attending the Public Service of the Church, and hearing the Word preached, and endeavour the right practice thereof in your Life and Conversation...You shall avoid all evil company and all Occasions which may tend to draw you to the same; and make speedy return, when you shall be sent on your Master's errands. You shall avoid idleness, and be ever employed in God's Service, or about your Master's business. You shall be of fair, gentle, and lowly speech and behaviour to all Men...and avoid all Manner of Gaming, Cursing, Swearing and Drunkenness.

[1] Instructions to London feltmaker apprentices from 1700 'to within the latter portion of the nineteenth century' (Hawkins, *Feltmakers*), p. 6.

Appendix 21: Bristol Company feltmakers and haberdashers, 1595-1865[1]

Available on thesis 'Excel (.xlsx) file'.

The membership list of the Bristol Feltmakers' and Haberdashers' Company is transcribed from the Company's minute book and contains records of apprentice periods, apprentice masters, admissions, quarterage other payments, citizenship, office holding, death, widows, and individual comments.

The first year's records in the minute book are light on membership details; there were just five members in 1596.[2] In addition, thirteen apprentices are noted either in apprenticeship records or the minute book, all of whom became Company members on completion of their training. Membership is assessed mainly from the records of annual quarterage payments.[3] For each quarterly payment, a line is scored next to a member's name. From 1613, these lists were in two columns, haberdashers to the left, and feltmakers to the right; the feltmakers paid half the amount contributed by the richer haberdashers. In some years these columns are switched, as in 1626, and, from about 1730, they cease to differentiate between the occupations of members. On death or departure from the Company, the name is scored through with, occasionally, the reason given.

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[1] Minute Book of the Company of Feltmakers and Haberdashers, Vol. 1 1595-1673, Vol. 2 1673-1865 (BRO, 08156/1&2).

[2] George Griffith, William Hunt, Walter Lyppett, William Swetman and William Wilcox. Each name in the minute books may be mentioned more than fifty times. Spellings variations have been recorded, but use in this file is standardised on the variation which is most common. In some cases, over ten variations have been noted.

[3] Occasionally, additional records were made or cancelled on a page away from the main list. Some errors have been corrected and evident gaps in individual membership filled, especially in years when there was no record of quarterage.

In 1597, the Company's first full year of operation, membership rose to thirty-six. A number of early years are not recorded (1599-1600, 1604-1606 and 1610), but the membership remained steady until 1611 when strong growth began, peaking at sixty-eight in 1628. Despite some fluctuation, the membership was still at sixty-seven in 1639. From there began a continuous decline, falling below thirty in 1683. In 1757, membership fell below twenty for the first time. By 1833, the last record of quarterage, there were five members, reduced to two in 1858; there is evidence through charity payments of a last member in 1865.

Between the 242 years, 1597-1838, there should be 484 masters; 320 have been found. The first were, in 1597, John Burgess (again 1603, 1609) and Anthony Elliott (1609); the wardens were Walter Lyppett (master 1609) and William Stratford (master 1603, 1609). Masters and ex-masters often acted as a senior group, meeting on behalf of the Company, and empowered to act after decisions had been approved. For those years where masters were found, 124 men (22%) held the position. Many men held multiple masterships, suggesting a possible concentration of power. Fifteen men were master five times or more, a third (102) of all masterships. Charles Whittuck, who was active in the Company including apprenticeship from 1747-1785, was master eleven times; John Dowell, 1743-1770, nine times: and John Davis (1687-1737), Thomas Owen senior (1721-1767), eight times.[4]

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[4] The other leading men were Samuel Davis (1725-1752), Thomas Evans (1700-1745), Richard Price (1700-1740), Thomas Pym (1634-1673), seven times; Richard Burgess (1597-1636), George Morgan (1627-1679), Timothy Powell (1753-1795), six times; and Daniel Child

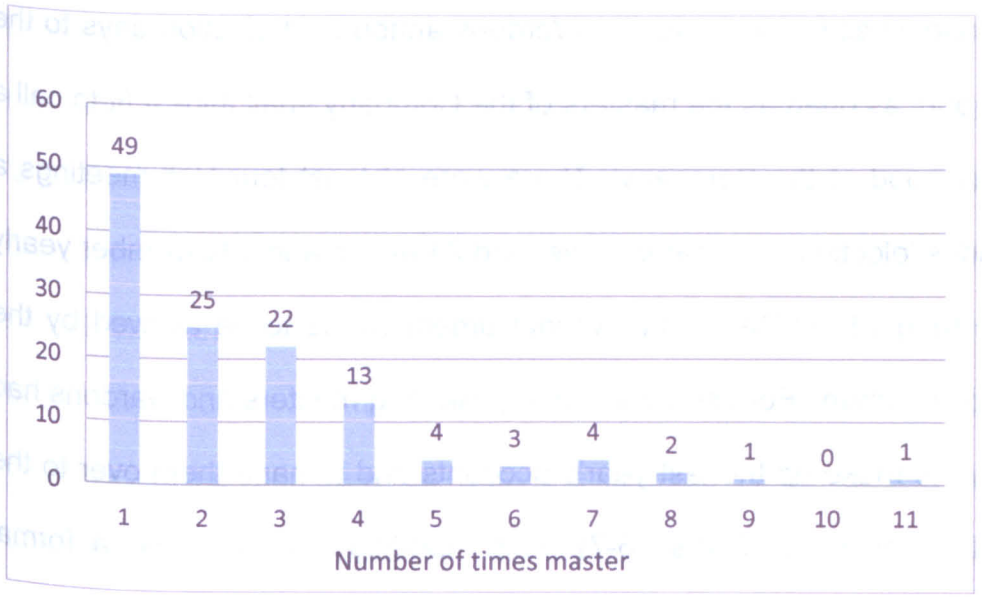

Figure 120: Masterships by individual members, 1597-1831.

A number of the thirty-six ordinances have already been discussed; a further sixteen dealing with administration are abbreviated and conflated here.[5] Retiring masters met within fifteen days of the feast day of St Michael the Archangel to nominate in their common Hall two feltmakers and two haberdashers for election 'by most voices' from the full Company for the two masters, one for each trade, for the coming year. Neglect of duty was fined 20s (Ordinance 1). Refusal to take office after election brought a fine of 10s (5). The two new masters were presented by the old masters within five days to the mayor and aldermen at the 'Tolsey of Bristol' to be sworn and 'take their oaths for the due execution of these Ordinances'. Failure to comply by either old or new masters brought a fine of 20s each (2). Any Company member absenting himself 'either at the election of the masters or of the swearing of them without

(1680-1722), Meredith Davis (1705-1743), William Fry (1649-1706), James Harding (1716-1740), five times.

[5] 17/11/1611 (BRO, 043691/1).

lawful excuse' shall forfeit 3s 4d (3). Wardens announced election days to the Company and 'as often as the masters of the Company shall think it fit to call a Hall for the good of the Company'. There were at least four Hall meetings a year (besides 'election' and 'oaths' days) and 24 March and 5 November yearly 'being the King's Holy Days shall without urgent cause to be allowed by the mayor and aldermen'. Forfeits were 10s (4). Retiring masters and wardens had fifteen days to make up the last year's accounts and to hand them over to the new masters 'on pain of 40s' (6-7). This 'handing over' became a formal process for the Company and was noted in the minute book at the beginning of each year and signed by the four masters. New masters kept four quarter days each year for 'the gathering up of quarterage and searching for bad [cleares].[6] The masters had eight days after each feast to do this work or they were fined 40s (32). Wardens collected monies from the journeymen and gave a 'just and true account' each year six days before the day of the masters' account 'upon pain of forfeiture of £5' (33).

Several ordinances dealt with fees, financial limits and quarterage. Completed apprentices or admissions to the Company should pay no more than 3s 4d 'upon pain of £40' (14). Masters paid quarterage of 4d, freemen 4d and journeyman 3d (16). Refusal to pay quarterage brought fines of 2s 6d (17). Wardens were to collect monies from the journeymen and must give a 'just and true account' each year six days before the day of the masters' account 'upon pain of forfeiture of £5' (33). Masters presented all fines with the name of every

[6] The Feast of St John the Evangelist, the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Nativity of St John the Baptist, and the Feast of St Michael the Archangel.

person offending before the mayor and aldermen one half of which was to be used by the Company and the other half by the city. Masters and wardens took 'a distress of the goods of every offender' until the penalty was satisfied. If the offender 'shall be obstinate and will not in their Common Hall conform him or herself ... within one month then with the mayor's consent' then the mayor could 'discontinue and disfranchise every such offender as well from the freedom of the Company as from the liberties of the said city' until they completely conformed' (36).

The location and occupation of homes were prescribed. All feltmakers had to 'dwell within this city and to pay his quarterage and to do all other duties belonging to the said Company or common Hall'. If a feltmaker lived outside the city, or otherwise did not comply, he was required to bring 'his felts to the common Hall there to be viewed by the masters and pay such duties for every dozen as a foreigner doth'. Each default was charged at 10s (28). No member 'being free of this city' was allowed to 'set up and keep house before he be married except he may dispend 40s of free lands or worth £10 of his own proper goods' upon 'pain of forfeiture of £10' (30).

Alterations were made to the ordinances in 1668 after the Company decided fines were too small for some of the offences.[7] Any elected master refusing to take office within twelve days would now be fined £5, an elected warden 50s. Anyone absent without lawful excuse from a Company meeting having had

[7] 3/11/1668 (BRO, 04369/1), p. 217.

'due notice or warning given him or left at his house' was fined 5s; all these fines were for the 'use of the poor to be distributed by the mayor and the masters of the Company'.

In 1688, the Company noted that they met for the first time in their new [unnamed] Hall.[8]

The Company's masters were summoned before the mayor in 1699 for the third and final changes to the ordinances. It was not without dispute as, at vote in the Hall, it was passed by twelve votes to four. No reasons are given for the disagreement. The changes concerned, mainly, increases in payments, haberdashers continuing to pay twice that of the feltmakers. Quarterage was now 2s for every haberdasher and 1s for every feltmaker, both against a fine of 10s; apprentice enrolment 5s and 2s 6s, respectively, with the same penalty as before; becoming free and being admitted to the Company, 20s and 10s. Any feltmaker who decided later to become a haberdasher was to pay the extra 10s against a penalty of 40s. This last change indicates that, as the felt hat manufacture increasingly left Bristol during the second half of the seventeenth century, the remaining businesses increasingly moved into retail. This trend accelerated during the eighteenth century.

Three Articles, (11), (14) and (20) of the ordinances of 1611, were deleted. These concerned the marriage situation of a journeyman on employment by a

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[8] 5/11/1688 (BRO, 08156/2).

Company member, the limitation on fees to be paid by a completed apprentice, and sanctions against trimmers. The first was, probably by this time, unenforceable; the second unnecessary; and the last recognised the assimilation of the trimmer's trade into the work of the hat finisher.[9]

Some examples of fines are usefully mentioned. In 1667, Thomas Saunders was taken before the mayor and aldermen as a persistent non-payer of fines. The feltmakers' petition was upheld and Saunders was disenfranchised.[10] Samuel Packer, feltmaker, was fined 6s 8d in 1713 for being absent from Hall after a warning and for putting journeymen to work without first clearing with the Master.[11] In 1718, Arthur Hooper, apprentice to his father John who died, was allowed to carry on his trade for the remaining nineteen months 'without molestation in consideration of 3 guineas'.[12] Fines were more regularly recorded in the nineteenth century. An example for 1810 shows four feltmakers fined 2s 6d for absenteeism.

Most of the remaining notes deal with *ad hoc* matters of finance of which a few have been chosen to show the range of concerns. In 1699, the Hall needed repair and the common stock was 'in low state'. All young men that became masters were, instead of giving a free dinner to the Company, to give £4 'to be managed and disbursed as the masters or majority of them shall think fit'. Any young man who wished to give more 'he shall have liberty so to do but none to

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[9]
[10] 6/3/1699 (BRO, 08156/1), pp. 576-575 (book working backwards).
[11] 10/4/1677 (BRO, M/BCC/CCP/1/7, fn. 97), cited in Rogers (*Craft Gilds*), p. 22.
[12] 2/10/1713 (BRO, 08165/2), p. 88.
31/3/1718 (BRO, 08165/2), p. 98.

have any liberty or privilege of giving less'.[13] Richard Sadler, haberdasher, died in 1717 and left the bulk of his estate to the Company. Francis Greville and Meredith Davies agreed to inspect Sadler's books, but found that 'there is not enough to pay his debts and legacies ... and have unanimously agreed to renounce their right of administration.[14] Davies agreed, in 1724, to be responsible for the interest on £20, being part of £30 15s 8d, 'being the whole stock of the Company'.[15] Apprentice fees were increased in 1741 and accommodation made for the new premium tax: for a haberdasher taking an apprentice with money from a guardian (a premium), 15s 2d, taking his son, 12s 2d; taking an apprentice without money, 5s 2d; a feltmaker with money or without, 5s 2d. Every member taking an apprentice, before delivering the indentures to the King's Officers to be stamped, was to bring them to the masters and pay the Company dues, 'in order for his enrolment the next Quarter Day', on penalty of 10s.[16] In 1785, £2 10s was paid for one year's rent for a warehouse.[17] It was agreed to reduce the sum of money at interest in 1794 and £10 was paid to the present masters. Quarterage was also advanced to 3s a quarter.[18] In 1800, with declining numbers, quarterly meetings were cancelled, but the annual dinner would continue on the second Wednesday in October. The masters were to summon the Company for business and the election of new starters at 2 o'clock, giving at least three days' notice. Any

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[13] 29/5/1699 (BRO, 08156/2), p. 113.
[14] 12-15/7/1717 (BRO, 08156/2), pp. 97-98.
[15] 19/10/1724 (BRO, 08156/2), p. 113.
[16] 12/10/1741 (BRO, 08156/2), p. 565.
[17] 17/10/1785 (BRO, 08156/2), p. 551.
[18] 15/10/1794 (BRO, 08156/2), p. 355.

member, unless sick or out of town, not appearing within half an hour of the start to be fined 5s.[19]

Masters saw the need for some specific injunctions on behaviour after experiences of bad language, self abuse, and, even the drawing of weapons. The 1611 ordinances dealt with matters at some length.[20] No member 'shall use any misbehaviour in words or in deed against the masters in their Hall, on pain of 6s 8d; nor against any that have been master, 3s 4d; nor against any other of member, 2s 6d; nor to any Company member out of the Hall, 2s (8). Absenteeism from the Hall 'upon lawful warning [and] having no lawful excuse, 12d (9). A freeman who 'shall abuse himself' in meetings in the Hall, may be taken before the mayor or aldermen 'to be reformed or punished (19). No freeman was to start any suit of law, except for debt, against another before demanding 'licence of the master' with the 'intent such matters may be first heard and determined and ended by the masters of the said Company upon entreaty', upon pain of 10s (24).

Punctuality remained a problem. In 1753, any member not coming within half and hour of the time of the warning was fined 1s 'for the contempt shown the Company'; masters and wardens were fined 2s if they were 'in town and not ill'. if any member was in town and did not come at all, the forfeit was doubled.[21] By 1787, leaving an accounts day or quarterly meeting early, 'except the clock

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[19] 29/10/1800 (BRO, 08156/2), p. 539.
[20] BRO, 04369/1.
[21] 9/11/1753 (BRO, 08156/2), p. 563.

strikes 10 at night', meant another fine 'and this shall also extend to the masters without leave of the majority of members'.[22]

William Risum, or Risom, a Bristol haberdasher, left £6 in his will of 1644 as a 'free gift' to the Company.[23] This generosity provided the foundation of a small charitable fund that was applied for over 200 years to less fortunate members, their wives and children. At the annual handing over of accounts by retiring to newly-elected master, a line was always included for 'Risom's Gift'.[24] The money bought several adjoining tenements in Tucker Street and the proceeds were allocated for 'the use and benefit of decayed feltmakers'. By 1779 and 'for a number of years past', 'The Company of Hatters' received an annuity of £6 a year on the properties.[25] As part of work on the 'widening and rendering commodious the ways and avenues' leading to Bristol Bridge, the properties were compulsorily sold at the Guildhall in 1786 at an assessed value of £134.26 There were difficulties proving title which resulted in the £134 being deposited in the Chamber of Bristol without interest. The Company spent £27 2s 9d making 'various applications and efforts' to get the money and were not successful until 1794. By next year, when the purchase was actually made, the value had risen to £166 13s 4d and this was used to buy 3% Consols Stock and placed in trust for the 'decayed feltmakers'.[27]

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[22] 15/10/1787 (BRO, 08156/2), p. 562.
[23] BRO, 08156/1, p. 256.
[24] For instance, 20/10/1674 (BRO, 08156/2), p. 5.
[25] 6/10/1779 (BRO, 08156/2), pp. 558-551.
[26] Barb Drummond, *Death and the Bridge: The Georgian Rebuilding of Bristol Bridge*, 2nd edition (Bristol, Private, 2007).
[27] 16/1/1795 and 13/4/1795 (BRO, 08156/2), pp. 550-549.

Considerable numbers of charitable cash payments were made through the years. For example, in 1779, Sarah Parslow received 12s 4½d and Mrs Cross £5 12s 10½d. Payments were made in 1781 to Mr Cornish £2 10s, Mrs Hake £1 5s & Mrs Buxton £1 5s; and, in 1782, a total of £24 to Mrs Cornish £2 10s; Mrs Buxton £1 5s; Mrs Cross 17s, and Mrs Buxton £1 5s; 1783 to Mrs Cross £1 5s, Mrs Cornish £2 10s, Mrs Buxton £1 5s, Mrs Hake £1 5s, Mrs Cornish £1 5s, Mrs Hake 17s.[28]

[28] For instance, 6/10/1779-1783 (BRO, 08156/2), pp. 419-421, 554-543.

Appendix 22: Burgess feltmakers, 1558-1868

Available on thesis 'Excel (.xlsx) file'.

Appendix 23: 'Failed' feltmaker apprentices

Feltmaker apprentice records were examined for reasons why a youth left the apprenticeship or declined citizenship.[1] Many of the explanations were positive or understandable. However, in the wrong hands, apprenticeship could be an unpleasant contract. Aspirations changed as individual apprenticeships ground slowly to conclusion. Collectively, they show that the argument that 'failure' equated with lack of citizenship is unsatisfactory.[2]

Objectives	Reason to leave / decline freedom		
	Break vows	**Unforeseen event**	**Personal**
Skill acquisition	Criminality	Death / sickness	Laziness
	Disrespect	Home call	Unable to learn
	Bad habits	Press gang	Loss of interest
	Marriage	War	Career change
From want		Death of master	Grown up - confidence
		Decline in trade	Unpleasant environment
			Wanderlust
			Inheritance
Joining 'club'			Expense
			Held back
			Blackballed
Right to work	Desertion		Sufficient learned
			Qualified journeyman
			Another opportunity
Right to trade			Expense
			No opportunity
			Limited skills
			Unappealing
Capital accumulation			Able to trade elsewhere
			Lower cost elsewhere
			Less regulation

Table 11: Reasons given for 'failed' feltmaker apprenticeships.

[1] Feltmaker minute books, apprentice records, BRO; *FFBJ*; *BM*.
[2] Ilana Krausman Ben-Amos, 'Failure to become freemen: urban apprentices in early modern England', *Social History*, Vol. 16, No. 2, May 1991, pp. 155-172. Wallis, Patrick, 'Apprenticeship and Training in Premodern England', *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 68, Issue 03, September 2008, pp. 832-861.

Appendix 24: Process: Apprentice feltmaker to burgess, c. 1710

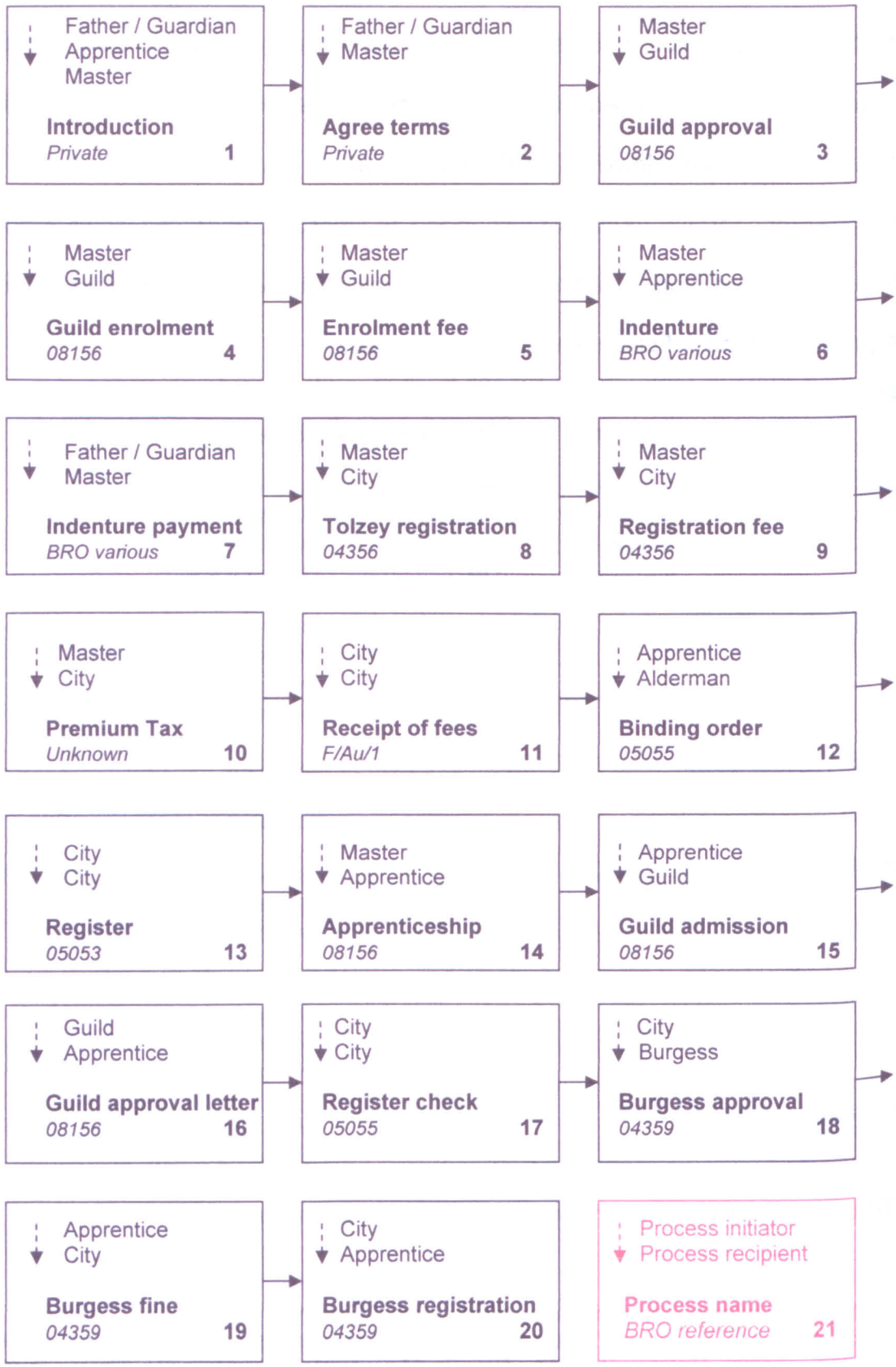

Table 12: Apprentice feltmaker to burgess, c. 1710.

There are seven principal participants in the compilation of a list of city trade apprentices for which records may exist: the apprentice; his parents or guardian; the master and his wife; the trade guild or company; the municipal court of registration; the city chamberlain or tax collector; and, if the apprenticeship was successfully completed and an application made to become a burgess, the city council and, again, the city chamberlain. Each stage of administration required a formal record, sometimes duplicated as with the two halves of a wavy-edged indenture or a re-scribing from court rough book to city record. Together these records comprise twenty stages for a feltmaker's progress in Bristol around 1710.[1]

[1] There is an uncertain relationship in Bristol's archives between the various records. To go to one class alone to compile a trade list of apprentices is to underestimate the business process. Depending on the year of apprenticeship and the record books then in force, there is a minimum of twelve points at which a feltmaker apprenticeship, or any apprenticeship in a guild trade, can be found. When private letters, incidental newspaper reports, guild reviews, turnovers, and misdemeanours are added, feltmaker apprentices have been found in twenty-two sources. This is not to underestimate the dedication of the B&AFHS who in 2010 embarked on the complete transcription of the Bristol apprentice registers.

Appendix 25: Hall contribution to preparations for war, 1644[1]

Jo Champnighs	3s
Rich Bayly	2s
Arther Taylor	2s 6d
William Burgis	1s 6d
Gorge Morgan	3s
Thomas Pym	2s 6d
Hennery Gibbs	2s
Francis Lymell	5s
Will Workman	1s
Jo^{n} Slann	1s
Ed Mayd	6d
Widdow Tyly	1s
Ed Harford	1s
Jo^{n} Shepheard	1s 6d
Nicholas Crap	6d
Simon Moore	1s
Jo^{n} West	1s
Phillip Jones	A pike
Rob Blanch	A sourd

[1] BRO, 08156/1.

Appendix 26: Coastal trade, 1775-1787

Available on thesis 'Excel (.xlsx) file'.

Appendix 27: Hatters of Carmarthenshire, 1633-1901

There is a valuable record of 1633 in the book of the Common Council of Carmarthen which provides a date for the spread of, and need for, felt hat making. Lewis Lloyd petitioned council members for his admittance as a burgess of the county borough to 'exercise his trade of a hatter'. The members agreed because they found the town 'destitute of such a tradesman'. Lloyd paid £3 for his admittance and entered into a £100 bond 'not to meddle with any other trade, or exercise any other mystery, but only the trade of a hatter'.[1] The Lloyds prospered and so did the trade.[2] In 1651, the Council noted a petition of men 'having been brought up as hatters or feltmakers' by finished apprenticeship, including a Richard Leigh, haberdasher of hats, and approved the formation of a Company or fraternity for the trade.[3] William Lloyd the elder, 'one able person', was first master and six years later, he was the town mayor.[4] In 1664, Edward Lloyd was mayor of Carmarthen, Walter an alderman, and John sworn as deputy recorder.[5] The 1684 will of William the elder, a probable

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[1] 26/11/1633, signed Thomas Woode, mayor, and eleven burgesses (CRO, MUS 155), opposite p. 59.
[2] 'So recently at 1867, there was a stall in the market place for the sale of Welsh women's felt hats, kept by one Lloyd'. Also 7/3/1708 Robert Lloyd, son of Edward Lloyd, felt maker, was sworn a burgess (he having served his father for the term of seven years to the trade of feltmaking) and petitioned for the same, who was accordingly sworn before me, Wm Gower, Mayor' (Carmarthenshire Antiquarian Society and Field Club, Vol. 3), pp. 1-2. The Lloyds also figure strongly in the local town of Kidwelly: Walter, alderman 4/10/1652 and 1653, 5/1657; Edward, 1655, mayor 1664 and 1673 (CRO, *Corporation Order Book of Kidwelly 1634-84*).
[3] 16/3/1651 (CROI, MUS 155), p. 77 and continuation. The Hatters' and Feltmaker's Company was described as the 'last of the Guilds' (Joyce and Victor Lodwick, *The Story of Carmarthen*, 1953, reprint Carmarthen, St Peter's Press 1995), p. 286.
[4] Master 1/5/1651; mayor 5/10/1657 (CRO, MUS 349), p. 173.
[5] 28/10/1664 (CRO, MUS 349), p. 213.

son of Lewis Lloyd, survives and is attached to a much smaller probate inventory than that of Thomas Dawes of Bristol taken just two years later.[6]

Among the collection of wills of the hatters of West Wales is that of feltmaker Thomas Thomas of Haverfordwest.[7] Thomas's will was written in 1645 and proved in 1652.[8] The bulk of his estate went to his wife, Elizabeth, and their daughters, each of whom after individual bequests received two silver spoons. Apprentice Francis Elwin received 50s at the end of his term and William Price received one dozen [hat] blocks and a bow. Thomas could well have been the local hatter for William Walter, grandfather of the Duke of Monmouth, living in Roch Castle just six miles away.

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[6] Will, William Lloyd of the county borough of Carmarthen 28/4/1684, probate inventory 19/6/1684 (National Library of Wales, SD/1684/31/W&I).

[7] There are a large number of interesting St David's wills and inventories of the west Wales hatters in the National Library of Wales, including Morgan Thomas, feltmaker and hatter (SD/1610/50); Henry Madocke, feltmaker, 'Swansey' (SD/1682/200); John Apperley the elder, feltmaker, Llandeilo (SD/1696/60); William David, feltmaker, 'Swanzey' (SD/1719/212); Thomas Luntley, hatter, Haverfordwest (SD/1758/46); Hugh Thomas, hatter, Cardiganshire (SD/1793/63); John Thomas, hatmaker, Llanarth (SD/1795/150); Joseph Maund the elder, hatter, Haverfordwest (SD/1798/58); John Thomas, hatter, Carmarthen (SD/1800/31); Jenkin Evans, hatter, Cardiganshire (SD/1802/190); John David John Morgan, hatter, Carmarthenshire (SD/1808/100); James Davies, hatter, Narbeth SD/1810/219); David Jones, hatter (SD/1811/213); Stephen David, hatter, Narbeth (SD/1816/162); Thomas Philipps, hatter, Carmarthen (SD/1820/30); Thomas Davies, hatter, Carmarthen (SD/1827/31); David Evans, hat manufacturer, Carmarthen (SD/1827/33); David Thomas, hatmaker, Cardiganshire (SD/1827/181); David Reynolds, hatter, Carmarthen (SD/1828/40); John Jones, hatter, Uzmaston, Pembrokeshire (SD/1839/187); William Hughes, hatter, Carmarthen (SD/1840/158); Jenkin Evans, hatter, Llandybie (SD/1840/73); Benjamin Davies, hatter, Haverfordwest (SD/1842/280); John Daniel, hatter, Blaenpenall, near Aberystwyth, a small hatting centre in the 1840s (SD/1843/321); David Edwards, hatter, Lampeter (SD/1850/240); Thomas Davies, hatter, Carmarthen (SD/1855/1855).

[8] Thomas Thomas, feltmaker, Haverfordwest, will 13/11/1645, proved 26/11/1652 (National Library of Wales, SD/1652/22).

Hat manufacturer continued at Carmarthen well into the 1800s, but followed the rest of the country outside of Stockport and London into terminal decline.[9] The village of Llandybie, near Ammanford, to the east of Carmarthen, was well known at this time for its hat industry under the control of the Jackson family from Carmarthen. Hats were made in the *Siop yr Hatwr* behind the present Golden Grove Arms. Gan Elwyn, properly the Rev H Elwyn Thomas (compare Francis Elwin, feltmaking apprentice to Thomas Thomas of Haverfordwest) was a prolific writer in Welsh of now little-known novels, sometimes in collaboration with Watcyn Wyn, pseudonym of W Hezekiah Williams. In *Cynwyn Rhys, Pregethwr*, one of Elwyn's earlier novels, there are many mentions of Jackson and his shop: 'If the main purpose of a school is to provide education, there was no place in the area more important than the Hatter's Shop. People of all ages could call in at any time, except Sundays, to take part in discussions & debates...The shop was quite ordinary with a thick straw roof, huge chimneys & wide windows. The atmosphere inside was always smoky...Everything [the hatter] read, he remembered. He was thought of as an oracle amongst the villagers. He was very wise & people came from far & near to hear him speak. His favourite word was *patience* & his favourite proverb *It is only slowly & step by step that you push a finger into a gnat's*

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[9] Hat Manufacturers and Hatters: John Davies, Market St; John Davies, Water Street; Thomas Davies, Guildhall Square; David Evans, Water Street; John Evans, Water Street; William Hughes, Guildhall Square; Evan Jones, Lammas Street; David Reynolds, Lamas Street (Pigot's, 1822). In 1822, David Richards, a hatter 'stepped in to interfere when a brute of the name of David Lewis, most unmercifully beat his aged father and mother...The monster Lewis took out his knife and stabbed [Richards] in the body in several places: he now lies with very little hope of recovery. Lewis has absconded (*BM*, 18/5/1822). John Davies, Lower Water Street; David Evans, Lower Water Street; John Evans, John's Town; William Griffiths, Water Street; John Harris, Little Water Street; David Jenkins, Lower Water Street ; David Jones, Magazine Row; John Jones, Little Water Street; William Jones, Little Water Street; John Lewis, Water Street; William Lynch, Water Street; John Phillips, St Catherine Street (Pigot's, 1844).

mouth ... He was rarely seen in the shop before ten in the morning, but he was usually still there at eleven o'clock at night, especially if there was a lively discussion. The visitors would sit on the benches or round the fire with [the hatter] in the middle or just getting on with his work, designing, boiling & colouring the hats'.[10]

In the 1860s in Oldland Common in South Gloucestershire, there were three hatters, all born in Carmarthen: Thomas Davis, David Harris and John James. There were also at least ten local-born hatter Davises in Oldland dating back to 1747.[11] The Welsh colonisation of Bitton, regardless of trade, at this time was: 1851, 65; 1861, 26; 1871, 30; 1881, 167; 1891, 34; 1901, 32.[12]

[10] Gan Elwyn, *Cynwyn Rhys, Pregethwr*, translated privately (Cardiff, Educational Publishing Company, undated), pp, 15, 32, 52, 55, 70 and 135-6.
[11] Davis born c. 1810 (1861/71 census); Harris b1807 (1841-71); James, born c. 1805 (1861 census).
[12] 1851-1901 censuses.

Appendix 28: Provisions of the Hat Duty Act, 1784[1]

1. No master is to carry on the business of a hat-maker who does not rent a house of £10 per annum, or pay the poor rates; his house to be entered in the same manner as tea-dealers.

2. No hats to be weighed out without six hours' notice being given to an exciseman.

3. No hats to be lined without first being stamped a little above the band in the inside of the crown, which is called the jaw.

4. No hats to be packed for exportation without six hours' notice being given to an exciseman.

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[1] *Bath Chronicle*, 15/7/1784.

Appendix 29: Correspondence on straw hats and excise duty, 1799[1]

Dowells & Ewer, Bristol, to C Bragge, Houses of Parliament, 15/3/1799

Sir, The favour of your letter respecting your application to Mr Pitt we feel very much obliged for and which would immediately have been applied to but that our partner is only lately returned after an absence of some weeks from home.

We beg first to state in answer to the question, how we manufactured hats so as to enable the lower classes to be purchasers of them: Children's and youths' hats are sold by use from 10d per hat and men's [*] one shilling per hat upwards to the highest price so it is evident that the poor person is not relieved in the price by the purchase of a straw hat so manufactured in the French prisons but the greater grievance that we experience and complain of arises from our loss of trade at Portsmouth and Plymouth where the demand from the seamen of HM Ships for our manufacture from 18d to 6s per hat has formerly during a war proved a most seasonable relief to us but to such an increasing extent in the straw hat manufacture carried on particularly at the prisons at Portsmouth and Plymouth that at both places we are respectfully assured from 150 to 200 hundred dozen are weekly made and so completely from long habit are they now put out of hand that the demand for our goods is become of little or no moment in consequence.

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[1] 15/3-5/12/1799, Correspondence: Dowel and Ewer; Gardiner Sons of Bristol; re loss of revenue in the hat trade by competition from straw hats, especially those made by French prisoners: prosecution of manufacturers for selling hats without the correct Excise stamp (GA, D421/X7, 19-21).

And we can assert with every degree of confidence that of this large quantity of straw hats so manufactured not a hat is ever sold with the stamp that the act requires that every sort of hat shall have affixed, should it be absent that the vendors of them are alike open to the penalties incurred as if they sold hats manufactured from wool. It is necessary to remark from the lowness of the price they are become such a species of traffic with the Jews and others of the lowest description that a respectable shopkeeper will have nothing to do with the sale of straw hats. The revenue is in consequence suffering very materially by such an evasion as will many manufacturers in this City and neighbourhood with the loss of considerable trade.

We have never heard of any manufactory for men's straw hats in this Kingdom, indeed we are confident with the attempt made the price of labour would mitigate against their use by coming too high for judging the manufacture of a child's hat of this description made at Dunstable in Bedfordshire a man's straw hat made of similar quality would be would be worth from [*]1/20 shilling but labour in the instance of French prisoners making them not being anything, the materials are of course all the value upon.

We have only to add that your further kind exertions on behalf of the trade in general they will feel very grateful for and that orders will shortly be issued to prevent the further manufacture of hats by French prisoners.

Letter to Dowells & Ewer, from Edmund Estcourt, Stamp Office, 20/11/1799

Dear Sir, I have this day communicated the contents of your letter to the prosecutions against persons at Bristol for selling hats with improper stamps to the Commissioners of Revenue and at the same time the Petition of Mr Gardiner and Sons with six others was read and considered and I am directed by the Commissioners to inform the participants that they have ordered the proceedings to be staid on payment of one M[*] of the penalty of pound 10 and the costs.

I am also desired to mention to you that the Commissioners have received various complaints of the irregularity at Bristol respecting the hat duty and they have therefore thought it necessary to make an example of some of the offenders. They have however in consequence of your interference and their having stated that it arose from inadvertence and not by design, mitigated the penalty and they hope the [duty] will be more careful in future. The Commissioners observe with pleasure the statement in the petition that they have laid down such rules and given such directions as they will effectively prevent any such practices against their Revenue in future and they request the favour of you to [*] send to me any particulars of those regulations which they wish to recommend to others in the trial now under prosecution.

Letter from Joel Gardiner & Sons, Bristol, 5/12/1799

Dear Sirs, Your obliging letter I duly read and communicated its content to the Company of hat makers for your polite attention to them they beg me to return you their sincere thanks and they hope in future the Commissioners will have no reason to find fault with any evasion whatever as they have all given their servants positive orders to abide by the duty fixed upon each hat.

With every sentiment of esteem and respect, I am, Sir, etc.

Appendix 30: Bristol hatters, 1620-1915

Available on thesis 'Excel (.xlsx) file'.

Appendix 31: Burials in woollens, 1709-1740

Available on thesis 'Excel (.xlsx) file'.

This index, assembled by B&AFHS, is taken from *Affidavits of Burials in Woollen*, and is supplemented by *Grouts leading into the Common Sewer*, Temple Parish, and *Inhabitants in the Parish of Temple assessable for the Cleansing the Common the Common Sewer (1797)*.[1]

[1] Affidavits of Burials in Woollen (BCL). *Grouts leading into the Common Sewer, Temple Parish* and *Inhabitants in the Parish of Temple assessable for the Cleansing the Common the Common Sewer (1797)* (BRO, JQS / P / 151).
Available: www.bafhs.org.uk/resources/Occupationsrlewin.pdf, accessed 2010.

Appendix 32: Christy's and the perception of retailing, 1851[1]

The following is written to explain the principle upon which Christy & Co came to the unanimous resolution to establish a House at the West End of the town and to sell hats by retail, and which has been detailed and explained to Mr Geo Almond (Moore & Co) as the course we shall pursue in the event of his consenting to let to us his premises for a retail and wholesale shop. It was at last the unanimous resolution of the Partners that a shop should be opened at the West End of the Town in the following way, namely:

1st That our customers from the Country, merchants, our present and future retail customers, their servants, and all the connexions of our house may be accommodated in their own locality by our establishing a house for their obtaining our goods at the West End of Town.

2nd That it is to be *boum* in mind we are a wholesale house of business and must not condescend to make a small retail show or we shall discredit ourselves with those small hatters by coming down to their level, in style, manner and appearance.

3rd But we must, in one or two small compact and very genteel windows with one or two pink or tinted panes, exhibit the most approved styles of hat of the day and the most elegantly turned out things which can possibly be produced, for the following purposes, namely, to establish a trade, to establish

[1] 5/2/1851 (CA, Stockport Local Heritage Library).

a name, to keep us in mind in all the Colonies by officers and others carrying out very good hats on their heads, thereby causing a shipping demand where they go, to keep us right in our styles, to keep us right and make us acquainted with what men of fashion wear on their heads, above all things, to write (print) No 1 Bond Street in our hats, to print it on our invoices, in time to look like Sir E Antrobus's Teashop, Twinings tea shop, Alderman Copland's Bond Street, Peat's Bond Street, etc, and like Moore's only fresher and newer, and the reverse in every way of the hatter opposite, or Heath of Oxford Street, and all essentially retail men who ticket and puff to get trade. That, remembering our position, we must not come down to a lower one but maintain it in the manner before shewn.

Appendix 33: Examples of Dando's rides, 1810-1815[1]

Also available on thesis 'Excel (.xlsx) file' as a part of the next appendix.

1810	Williton	1813	Canterbury	1815	Bath
1810	Wells	1813	Canterbury	1815	Trowbridge
1810	Cullompton	1813	Rye	1815	Bath
1810	Callington	1813	Rye	1815	Westbury
1810	Newton Abbot	1813	Hastings	1815	Frome
1810	Tiverton	1813	Lewes	1815	Bathwick
1810	Taunton	1813	Lewes	1815	Sandford
		1813	Lewes	1815	Cullompton
1811	Tavistock	1813	Eastbourne, Shingle Barracks	1815	Alburton
1811	Lostwithiel	1813	Chichester	1815	Tiverton
1811	St Austell	1813	Chichester	1815	North Tawton
1811	Truro	1813	Chichester	1815	Langport
1811	Falmouth	1813	Portsmouth	1815	Honiton
1811	St Columb	1813	Portsmouth	1815	Starcross
1811	Petrockstowe	1813	Portsmouth	1815	Crediton
		1813	Ringwood	1815	Newton Abbot
		1813	Portsmouth	1815	Ashburton
		1813	Dorchester	1815	Plymouth
		1813	Weymouth	1815	Dartmouth
		1813	Beaminster	1815	Plymouth
		1813	Crewkerne	1815	Dock
		1813	Glastonbury	1815	Charnleigh
				1815	Liskeard
				1815	Looe
				1815	Dartmouth
				1815	Torquay
				1815	Brixham
				1815	Truro
				1815	Penzance
				1815	Falmouth
				1815	St Columb

[1] TNA, C 13/871/39.

1815 Padstow

1815 Bideford

1815 Holsworthy

1815 Liskeard

1815 Torrington

1815 Newport

1815 Barnstaple

1815 Bideford

1815 Stowey

1815 Bridgwater

1815 Milverton

1815 Langport

1815 Okehampton

Appendix 34: Debts, Dando, Heaven, 1810-1815[1]

Available on thesis 'Excel (.xlsx) file'.

Answers to a Bill of Complaint by Lydia Dando, and Elizabeth Dando and Mary Ann Dando, infants of the said Lydia Dando, their mother and next friend. Document contains vellum sheets, each a metre square, within a large roll of other unconnected complaints. It is in two parts: the separate responses to the complaint by Joseph Dando and Thomas Heaven. Lydia Dando complained (complaint, judgement not attached) that Joseph and Thomas misused their positions as partners and testators of Jehoiada Dando, Lydia's husband, to deprive her of her rights (and the children's) under the partnership. Joseph and Thomas vigorously defended their positions.

Joseph's response (points of immediate interest only) 21/7/1827

1. Four closely written sheets of legalistic argument.

2. Schedule 1 lists debts written off as bad or dubious from the commencement of the late partnership of Dando, Heaven & Co up to 31/12/1815 in the form of four pages of three lists per page of three columns each consisting of name of firm, town, £ s d debt. These total 860 debts totalling £10,613 10s 0d. These debts are listed in the Excel file and plotted geographically in the main text (figures 45-47) on the assumption that the debts presented a fair reflection of the spread of the business conducted by the firm and therefore provided a view of the business area covered ands its concentrations. Clearly, it was a substantial business.

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[1] TNA, C 13/871/39.

3. Schedule 2 lists fourteen debts received by the partners following Jehoiada's death amounting to £19 15s 1d. Further, there were amounts totalling £1,029 10s 11d charged by the partners to the account of Jehoiada in 1816 – mostly his personal living expenses charged to the business and presumably not reimbursed by Jehoiada.

4. Schedule 3 is a profit and loss account giving year end annual amounts shared equally out of the partnership by Joseph and Thomas after Jehoiada's death:

5. Schedule 4 shows the estate of Jehoiada which was c. £3,525 / 12 / 2 in deficit.

Thomas's response 27/7/1827

Similar in riposte to that of Joseph (three sheets). Notes that when John Dando died, Joseph and Thomas set up partnership which Jehoiada later joined. Admits that in 1810-1815 large profits were made and distributed. However, there were several listed misreportings and errors in the accounts which later substantially altered the picture. The profits, for instance, ignored the debts. Essentially they were incompetent book-keepers. The partnership folded.

Appendix 35: Hatting establishments, Castle area, 1722-1915

Available on thesis 'Excel (.xlsx) file'.

Appendix 36: Hatters' early closing movement, 1866[1]

The undersigned firms have agreed to close their respective establishments at 8 o'clock on Mondays throughout the Year, commencing on Monday, March 12, 1866

M Thornley, 17 Clare Street
Sergeant & Yeoman, Clare Street
Daniel Parsley, Clare Street
John Banks, Clare Street
John J Steadman, Union Street
Mary Jane Fowler, Dolphin Street
Wm F Sheppard, Union Street
Chas Garlick, Castle Street
Jno C Withers, Castle Street
Henry Higgs, Castle Street
Thomas Sage, Castle Street
S Milton, Bath Street
W Hewlett, High Street

[1] *BM*, 10/3/1866.

Appendix 37: Unemployment and overseas lures, 1764-1769

1764

- A great Number of Journeymen Hatters have, within these few Days, engaged themselves to go to Canada and Quebec, a Manufactory of Hats being to be established at each of those places.[1]
- We are informed that near half of the journeymen hatters about [London] are at present out of employment, said to be owing to the new manufactory lately set up at Marseilles and divers other parts of France.[2]
- The hatters in Newcastle have but a small Demand for their Goods, which they impute to some Restraints lately said to be laid on the West-India Trade.[3]
- They write from Lisbon, that his Faithful Majesty is going to establish a Manufactory of Hats in that City, and that a Number of English Journeymen Hatters are already arrived, to be employed.[4]
- A very considerable number of journey hatters at present out of employment.[5]

1765

- The week arrived in [London] from Lisbon several British artificers, who had been engaged soon after the Peace, to go over to Portugal, on high promises, which however did not turn out to expectation: they consist of sail-makers, hatters, [and others].[6]
- Yesterday morning, a great body of hatters went up with a petition to his Majesty, praying relief from the great hardships they labour under for want

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1 *St James Chronicle*, 14/8/1764.
2 *Gazette and New Daily Advertiser*, 29/8/1764.
3 *St James Chronicle*, 20/9/1764.
4 *St James Chronicle*, 13/10/1764; *London Chronicle*, 18-20/10/1764.
5 *Gazette and New Daily Advertiser*, 15/12/1764.
6 *Lloyd's Evening Post*, 7/1/1765.

of employment, some hundreds of them being in a starving condition, occasioned by the business being greatly engrossed by foreigners.[7]

- Several English artisans are every day arriving in different parts of this kingdom ... also many British hatters and Weavers, whom the want of employment has expelled from their native country.[8]

1767

- A Manufactory for Castor and Beaver Hats was established a few Years ago in Portugal upon the Estate of a Minister (well known to have a dislike to the English) under the Direction of a French Master Hat-maker, who with a Number of Workmen, were invited and encouraged to leave Paris and settle there. But the Want of Furs and other Necessities has constantly prevented their being able to make more than about 11,000 hats annually, which may be valued at near £5,000. It is well known to those who are conversant in the trade that the Portuguese have no manufactory of Castor and Beaver Hats except that at Pomal, and as the whole number annually made there, added to the 11,000 imported from England, amounts only to 12,100 Hats. The Reader plainly sees that the Diminution of the English exportation is not owing to the Exertion of Portuguese Manufactories but to the Encouragement of other foreign Imports and these are well known to be French, etc.[9]

1769

- Two men were taken into Custody in Southwark for endeavouring to seduce several Hatmakers to go to Germany to carry on the Hatting Business; which Offence by law is two Years' Imprisonment and a penalty of £200. These men decoyed six Hatters to go abroad about three Years ago.[10]

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[7] *Gazette and New Daily Advertiser*, 13/2/1765.
[8] *Westminster Journal*, 1/6/1765.
[9] *Public Advertiser*, 27/3/1767.
[10] *Public Advertiser*, 31/8/1769.

Appendix 38: Bristol hatter bankrupts, 1722-1910

Year	Surname	First names	Occ.[1]	Source[2]	Date
1722	Tyndall	Thomas	Ha	Un	9/3/1722
1726	Angier	John	Ha	Un	9/11/1726
1726	Hart	Nathaniel	HH	Un	8/9/1726
1733	Hunt	William	Ha	Un	9/1/1733
1741	Yerbury	Thomas	Ha	Un	12/3/1741
1793	Baker	Samuel	Ha	LG	26/10/1793
1804	Jeffery	Robert	HM	LG	10/4/1804
1810	Slocombe	Joseph	Ha	LG	22/1/1810
1814	Filer	James	Ha	LG	17/8/1816
1814	Cave	John	Ha	LG	21/5/1814
1814	Luddington	William	Ha	LG	15/10/1814; 27/1/1816
1814	Dwyer	James	Ha	LG	25/10/1814
1815	Edwards	John	Ha	LG	3/6/1815
1819	Withers	John	HM	BM	13/12/1819
1820	Keans	John	Ha	LG	9/9/1820
1820	Evans	John	HM	BM	20/11/1820
1821	Bradley	Gabriel Smith	Ha	LG	18/8/1821
1825	Collens	Benjamin Dove	Ha	BM	14/3/1825
1825	Daniell	John, the younger	Ha	LG	3/5/1825
1827	Protheroe	John	Ha	LG	11/5/1827; 24/7/1832
1832	Heath & Powell		HM	BM	17/11/1832; 1833
1833	Grant	Seth Burge	Ha	LG	6/9/1833; 25/7/1834
1833	Ransford	Thomas	HM	BM	4/5/1833; 26/7/1834
1834	Hart & Collins	Solomon C, Aaron H	Ha	LG	18/4/1834
1837	Ransford	Thomas Gay	HM	Times	11/2/1837
1838	Vowles	James Tucker	HM	BM	6/1/1838
1840	Woodman	John	Ha	LG	11/11/1840

[1] Occupation abbreviations: Ha, Hatter; HM, Hat manufacturer.
[2] Source abbreviations: BM, Bristol Mercury; LG, London Gazette; Un, Mislaid.

1844	Masters	John	HM	BM	20/4/1844
1851	Evans	Frederick Walter	Ha	LG	13/6/1851
1853	Philips	Robert	Ha	LG	23/12/1853
1851	Wyatt & Co	David Ion	HM	LG	22/4/1853
1854	Phillips	James	Ha	LG	6/1/1854
1857	Aston	William	HM	LG	31/3/1857
1859	Fulford	John	Ha	LG	6/5/1859
1860	Thomas	John	HM	BM	3/9/1869
1862	Everett	Joseph	Ha	BM; LG	7/6/1862; 29/7/1862
1864	Taylor	Robert	Ha	LG	1/1/1864
1865	Wadley	John	HM	BM	21/1/1865
1868	Swatridge		Ha	BM	31/10/1868
1869	Maggs	George	HM	LG	21/12/1869; 18/1/1870
1871	Stopford	Charles	Ha	LG	7/4/1871
1875	Watson	John	Ha	LG	13/7/1875
1881	Jefferies	J & Sons	HM	LG	26/8/1881
1893	Parsley	Henry Walter	Ha	BM; LG	21/10/1893; 18/06/1901
1893	Parsley	William	Ha	LG	17/1/1893
1910	Harding	George Frederick	Ha	LG	10/05/1910

Appendix 39: Hatters' extended credit and culpable insolvency, 1880[1]

Whatever may be the hopes entertained respecting the prospects of good trade during the current year, it is beyond question that the past years has been most disastrous for manufactures and traders in the hat and allied trades ... most of the failures are only what might have been expected from the course of trading pursued ... We take exception to the system of extended credit which finds so much favour at the present time. We believe it to be one of the greatest frauds in our trading community. Men are found commencing business with a capital of £50 or £200 who, in very short time, obtain credit for £500, of even more. This is not always their own fault. [The new man's] stock rapidly assumes proportions on the strength of manufacturers' credit, that it would have taken years to accumulate, had it depended solely on profits ... In the second place we take exception to the ease with which insolvent traders can get rid of their liabilities ... Manufactures are as much to blame. It is well known that on the receipt of the too familiar circular calling for a meeting of creditors, manufacturers often decide immediately to accept what the meeting agrees to. The meeting not infrequently resolves itself into a sympathetic council to promote the main objects of the debtor ... For many reasons a statement of a debtor's affairs prepared by himself ought not to be relied upon. The amount of injury inflicted upon the trading world by culpable insolvency is greater than which is attributable to anyone crime punishable by law.

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[1] *HG*, 1/3/1880, pp. 135-136.

Appendix 40: Counting the hats

Capacity and relationships of wine casks after 1707

Cask name	Alternative	Gallons	Ratio to Tun
Tun	Ton	252	1
Butt	Pipe	126	2
Puncheon	Firkin, Tertian	84	3
Hogshead		63	4
Tierce		42	6
Barrel		31.5	8
Cask		Variable	Variable

Comparison of voyages with hat cargoes, E 190 and Presentments

	Combined hat voyages	Combined hat cargoes	Cargoes in E 190	Cargoes in BP[1]	In both	E 190 only	BP* only
1773	77	91	45	77	31	14	46
		100%	49%	85%	34%	15%	51%
1777	59	76	54	57	36	18	21
		100%	71%	75%	47%	24%	28%
1778	50	64	53	35	18	34	15
		100%	83%	55%	28%	53%	23%
Total	186	231	152	169	85	66	82
		100%	65%	72%	37%	29%	35%

[1] Bristol Presentments.

Duplicate recording of numbers of hats E 190 and Presentments

	Total hats in E 190	Hats in E 190 & BP		Hats in E 190 alone		Hats in BP alone
1773	18,571	12,063	65%	6,508	35%	?
1777	11,952	5,844	49%	6,108	51%	?
1778	19,076	4,506	24%	14,570	76%	?
Total	49,599	22,413	45%	27,186	55%	?

Rate of use of containers for hats in Presentments

Five related wine measures, plus the cask, and eleven dry measures have been found among the Presentments. The tun, bale, basket, bundle, chest, crate, hamper, package and parcel are unrepresented in the sample, although well used in other years. The most popular containers were the box, 41%, and the cask, 22%. No pattern was found in the use of container relative to its recording in the Presentments or the Presentments & E 190 combination.

	Butt	Punch	Hogs	Tierce	Barrel	Cask	Box	Case	Trunk	Truss
1773	5	4	52	8	1	51	44	11	5	1
1777	0	11	14	3	1	19	83	2	2	1
1778	2	3	8	8	0	14	31	0	1	0
Total	7	18	74	19	2	84	158	13	8	2
	2%	5%	19%	5%	1%	22%	41%	3%	2%	1%

Search for standard values for hats in wet & dry containers

There is wide variance between the minimum and maximum content for most containers, perhaps in part because the original recording of container sizes was loose. The puncheon is out of step with the other casks, based on wine volumes. The common cask, depending on the shipper's need, could be anything from a small beer barrel to a butt and contained dozens varying from one to thirty-five. Boxes look tailor-made to fit each order. The lows and highs of some container types, for instance for the tierce, are so disparate as to make a standard difficult to judge.

Dry	Single count	Lowest hats	Highest hats	Mean	Median	Mode
Box	59	7	360	53	24	24
Case	2	120	192	*	*	156
Trunk	5	75	390	138	75	75

Wet	Single count	Lowest hats	Highest hats	Mean	Median	Mode	Wine ratio
Butt	2	300	300	300	300	300	2
Puncheon	9	60	300	153	120	120	3
Hogshead	34	180	390	260	200	200	4
Tierce	4	36	396	99	120	120	6
Barrel	1	120	120	120	120	120	8
Cask	19	12	420	140	80	80	0

Col. 2: The number of containers in the Presentments that can be identified with an enumerated cargo of hats in E 190. Cols. 3 & 4: The lowest & highest number of hats found in any container in E 190.

Applying the standard values to the multiple cargoes

Records of hats in 300 same-name containers were compared. Containers were not all filled to the brim; some held other goods. Estimates of a standard content were derived; imperfect results again, but constructive.

Butt	Hogshead	Case Chest Crate	Barrel Puncheon Tierce	Trunk	Cask	Bale Basket Box Bundle Hamper Package Parcel Truss
300	200	150	120	75	60	25

Table 13: Estimated numbers of hats in wet and dry containers.

For the three sample years, the E 190 series under-recorded hat cargoes in aggregate by 35%, the Presentments by 49%. These findings must give serious pause to previous assessments of exports from the city, at least in the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

	Total hats	**Hats in E 190**		**Hats in BP**	
1773	29,171	18,571	64%	22,663	78%
1777	21,551	11,952	55%	9,599	45%
1778	25,437	19,076	75%	6,361	25%
Total	76,159	49,599	65%	38,623	51%

Table 14: Comparison of hat cargoes in E 190 and Presentments.[2]

[2] There was one further test of the selection. The three-year sample provided fourteen multiple cargoes within the Presentments not used in these calculations, for example, 1 Box + 3 Casks contained 230 hats. Applying the standard values to the container half of these equations, produced an aggregated answer that is different by just over 1% from the number of hats provided by TNA, E 190 series.

Applying the standard values to the multiple cargoes

Multiple hat cargoes 1773, 1777 & 1778	**Units x first container**	**Units x second container**	**Total from standards**	**Total from E 190**
1 Box + 3 Cask	50	180	230	240
1 Case + 1 Cask	60	60	120	75
2 Hogs + 5 Box	400	125	525	480
1 Tier + 2 Cask	120	120	240	240
4 Box + 8 Cask	100	480	580	720
1 Box + 1 Trus	25	25	50	150
1 Box + 1 Cask	25	60	85	120
1 Tier + 1 Case	120	150	270	240
30 Box + 3 Cask	750	180	930	720
1 Box + 1 Cask	25	60	85	120
2 Hogs + 2 Box	400	50	450	360
1 Hogs + 2 Box	200	50	250	360
2 Punc + 3 Tier	240	360	600	840
2 Box + 3 Cask	80	180	260	60
Totals			**4,675**	**4,725**
			100%	*101%*

Appendix 41: International hat cargoes, 1679-1855[1]

Available on thesis 'Excel (.xlsx) file'.

[1] Exchequer of the King's Remembrancer: Bristol Overseas and Coastal (TNA, E 190 series).

Appendix 42: Cargo comparisons of fourteen Bristol slavers, 1725-1804

Available on thesis 'Excel (.xlsx) file'.

1725, *Dispatch*; 1732, *Cato*; 1759, *Swift*; 1769, *Hungerford*; 1774, *Africa*; 1776, *Africa*; 1786, *Fly*; 1790, *Pelican*; 1791, *Rodney*; 1791, *Sarah*; 1792, *Fame*; 1792, *Crescent*; 1792, *Swift*; 1804, *Swift*.

The first worksheet compares the cargoes of these fourteen slaver voyages; the following nine sheets examine the costs and suppliers of the cargoes of the *Fly*, *Swift* and *Hungerford* in more detail, comparing, where possible, the cargoes' costs to that year's bar price.

Appendix 43: The Dash Book of *Sarah*, 1790[1]

1790	1	5	Bembia	Arrival	*	1 ship's	Gun
						2	Iron bar
						1	Neptune
						1	Iron bar
						2 bars	Cloth
						1	Kettle
						2	Bason
						6	Knife
						6	Bell
						2 jugs	Liquor
						2 kegs	Gunpowder
						20 coppers	Salt
1790	1	10	Bembia	House over vessel	*	2 bars	Cloth
						2	Gun
						2 kegs	Gunpowder
						2	Iron bar
						2	Brass rod
						1 jar	Liquor
						6 bunches	Bead
						6	Knife
						20	Bell
1790	1	10	Bembia	Dash	Jack	2 laced	Hat
						2	Coat
						1 ship's	Gun
						1	Umbrella
						1 [*]	Cap
1790	1	10	Bembia	Dash	King Mercer	1 lace	Hat
						1	Coat
						1	Umbrella
						1 ship's	Gun
						1 keg	Gunpowder
1790	1	10	Bembia	Dash	Bob for Jack	1 lace	Hat
						1	Coat
						2 [*]	Cloth
						1	Shirt
1790	1	10	Bembia	Dash	Bos for Jack	1 lace	Hat
						2 [*]	Cloth
1790	1	10	Bembia	Dash	Long Beler	1 lace	Hat
						2 yards	Chintz
1790	1	10	Bembia	Dash	Bamboo Sam	1 lace	Hat
						1 ship's	Gun
						4 yards	Cloth
1790	1	10	Bembia	Dash	Dick King Son	1 lace	Hat
						1	Umbrella
						1 Great	Coat
						8 yards	Cloth
						1 white	Shirt
						1 pair	Stockings

[1] TNA, C 107/6.

						1 pair	Shoes
1790	1	20	Bembia	Dash	Coco	1 lace	Hat
						1	Westcoat
						1	Shirt
						1 pair	Shoes
1790	1	20	Bembia	Dash	Tim	1	Umbrella
						1 lace	Hat
						1	Coat
						1 pair	Shoes
						1	Westcoat
						8 papers	Tobacco
						4 yards	Chintz
						1	Kettle
1790	3	4	Cameroon	Customs	King George	8	Iron bar
						2	Neptune
						8	Copper rod
						60 pint	[Grocereys]
						1	Chest
						2 doz	Knife
						1	Bason
						10 bunches	Bead
						1 jar	Liquor
						30 coppers	Salt
1790	3	4	Cameroon	Dash for 40 slaves	King George	6	Neptune
						1 lace	Hat
						5 gallon	Rum
						1 red	Coat
						10 yards	Chintz
1790	3	4	Cameroon	Selling 50 slaves	Angua	1 suite	Cloth
						2 laced	Hat
						2 ship's	Gun
						1	Umbrella
						1	Kettle
						2	Bason
						1 pair	Shoes
						1 pair	Stockings
						5 gallon	Rum
						2 kegs	Gunpowder
						20 yards	Cloth
1790	3	4	Cameroon	Dash	Prishaw	2	Hat
						1	Umbrella
						1	Kettle
						10 gallon	Rum
						1 pair	Shoes
						1 Outside	Jacket
						8 papers	Tobacco
1790	3	4	Cameroon	Dash	Deboy	1 lace	Hat
						1 blue	Coat
						1	Shirt
						1 red	Coat
						1	Umbrella
						4 yards	Cloth
1790	3	4	Cameroon	Dash	Sam Tuds	1 lace	Hat
						1	Umbrella

						1	Kettle
						1	Westcoat
						1 pair	Shoes
						1 pair	Stockings
						5 gallon	Rum
						1	Iron pot
1790	3	4	Cameroon	Dash	Duke	1	Hat
						1	Coat
						1	Umbrella
						2 ship's	Gun
						8 yards	Cloth
						1	Jacket
						2	Shirt
						5 gallon	Rum
1790	3	4	Cameroon	Dash	Bells	1	Umbrella
						4 yards	Chintz
						3 gallon	Rum
1790	3	4	Cameroon	Dash	Jim Lindse	1 lace	Hat
						1	Coat
						1 ship's	Gun
						8 yards	Cloth
						1	Umbrella
						2 gallon	Rum
1790	3	4	Cameroon	Dash	Mr Green	1 lace	Hat
						1	Umbrella
1790	3	4	Cameroon	Dash	Meleker	1 lace	Hat
						2 yards	Cloth
						1 gallon	Rum
1790	3	4	Cameroon	Dash	Decutter	1 lace	Hat
						2 yards	Chintz
1790	3	4	Cameroon	Dash	Angua's people	3	Hat
						6 yards	Cloth
1790	3	4	Cameroon	Dash	Jim Mercer	1 lace	Hat
						1	Coat
1790	3	4	Cameroon	Dash	Peter a [d]oe	1 red	Coat
						1	Umbrella
1790	5	28	Old Calabar	Anchorage	Duke &	24 gallon	Rum
					Egboe [Young?] &	3 suits [*]	Cloth
					Antera	1	Hand organ
						400 coppers	Salt
						60 papers	Tobacco
						1 box	Pipe
						2 doz bottle	Liquor
						3 pair	Shoes
						24 bunches	Bead
						6	Decanter
						3 doz	Wine glass
						3	Funnel

Appendix 44: Cargo of *Fly* in barrs, 1786[1]

		Fly cargo	Barrs
547	Gallons	Brandy	410
1999	Pounds	Virginia tobacco	333
75		Dyed Garralo Blue	450
60	12 yards	Chintz patna	300
60		Chilloes Blue	408
60		Berjudapants Blue	360
60		Cherryderryes Blue	240
60		Cushtaes Blue	240
69		Romalls Blue	248
120		Niconeese Blue	480
10		Bandanas yellow	60
		Mallabar hogsheads	
12'2		Romalls	50
50		Shaul's cotton	58
1	Doz	[*] hogsheads	6
500	Yards	Calico printed	249
530	Yards	Chintz	202
420		Brass kettles	209
60		Brass pans	60
100	Pounds	Pewter basons, diff sizes	45
240		French & Danish guns	1200
410	Kegs	Gunpowder	820
710	Pieces	Assorted earthenware	177
137	Barrs	Iron	137
720		Worsted caps	180
360		Trade hats	240
491	Yards	Irish Linen	245
180	Doz	Knives	120
300	Bunches	Barleycorn beads	126
12	Pounds	Thread	12
4		Swivel guns weight [*] each	48
4		Carriages for swivel guns	24
1		Swivel gun without carriage	6
2	Doz	Clasp knives	6
Part	Box	Pipes	13
	Total		**7762**
		2 tons rice	200
		49 prime slaves @ 145	7105
		4 slaves under measure	457
			7762

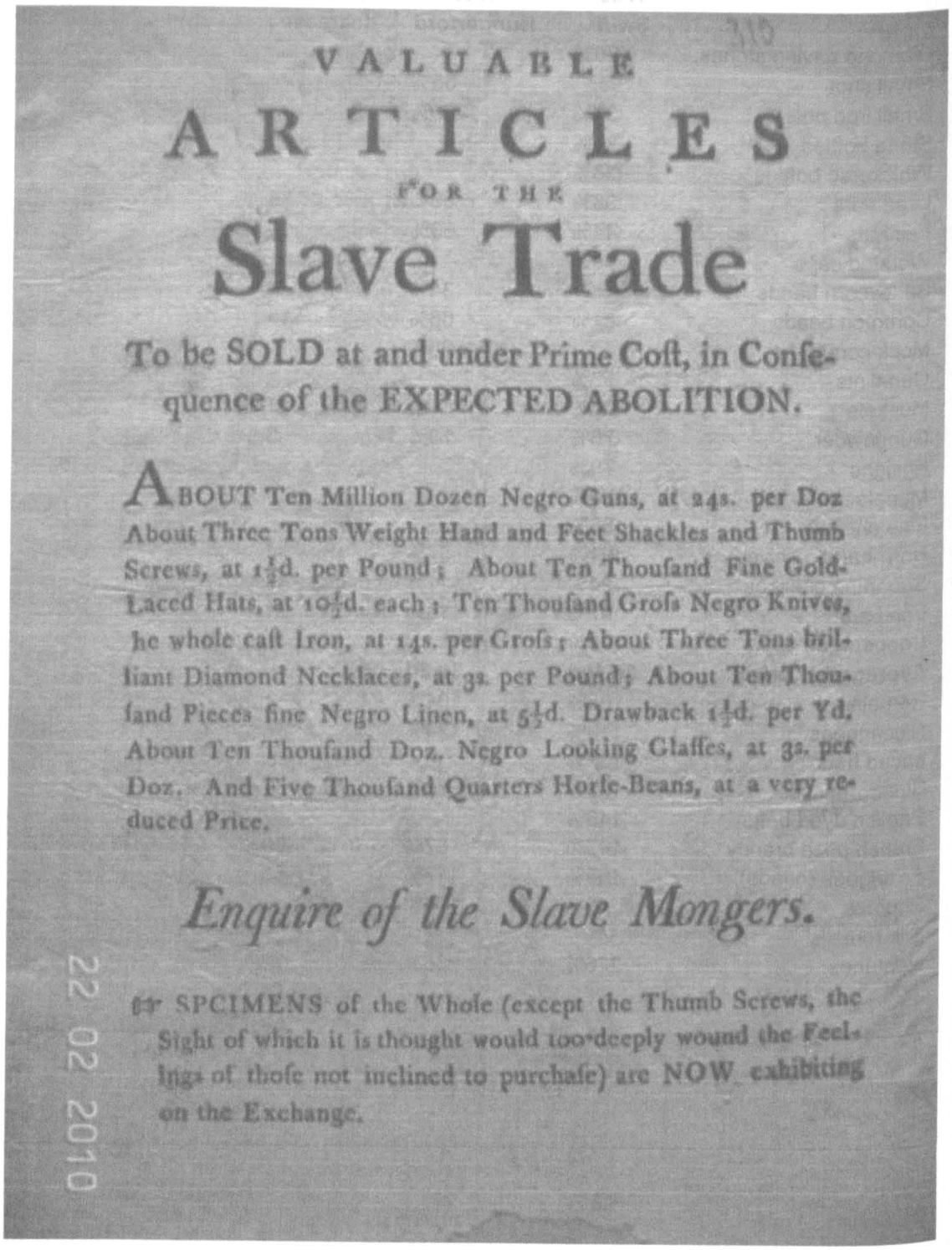
[1] TNA, C 107/1.

Appendix 45: Barr cargo prices of the *Swift*, 1759; *Hungerford*, 1769[1]

	1759 Swift	1769 Hungerford	Increase / decrease
Diamond paving stones	20%		
Small shot		55%	
Small iron pots	31%	25%	-6
Stone bottles	36%		
Whickered bottles	38%		
Lead bars	38%	68%	30
Felt hats	44%	63%	19
Worsted caps	49%		
Barleycorn beads		34%	
Common beads	51%	66%	15
Mock coral		68%	
Gun flints	53%		
Muskets	57%	68%	11
Gunpowder	76%	79%	3
Ensigns	79%		
Manelaes	79%		
Fine chelloes	88%		
Horn-handle knives	91%	87%	-4
Superfine chelloes	94%	111%	17
Iron bars	97%	118%	21
Copper rods	99%		
Average bar price	**3s 10d**	**3s 2d**	
Romalls	105%	104%	-1
Niccannees	113%	124%	11
Laced hats	132%		
Blunderbusses	138%	76%	-62
English dyed bafts	146%		
French prize brandy	147%	67%	-80
Arrangoes (beads)	168%	117%	-51
Photaes		174%	
Silk romalls		238%	
Neptunes	216%	286%	72

[1] *Swift* (BRO, 39654(2)); *Hungerford* (University of Bristol, Arts and Social Sciences Library, DM 15/2475).

Appendix 46: Mock auction poster of slavers' wares[1]



VALUABLE

ARTICLES

FOR THE

Slave Trade

To be SOLD at and under Prime Coſt, in Conſequence of the EXPECTED ABOLITION.

ABOUT Ten Million Dozen Negro Guns, at 24s. per Doz About Three Tons Weight Hand and Feet Shackles and Thumb Screws, at 1½d. per Pound; About Ten Thouſand Fine Gold-Laced Hats, at 10½d. each; Ten Thouſand Groſs Negro Knives, he whole caſt Iron, at 14s. per Groſs; About Three Tons brilliant Diamond Necklaces, at 3s. per Pound; About Ten Thouſand Pieces fine Negro Linen, at 5½d. Drawback 1½d. per Yd. About Ten Thouſand Doz. Negro Looking Glaſſes, at 3s. per Doz. And Five Thouſand Quarters Horſe-Beans, at a very reduced Price.

Enquire of the Slave Mongers.

☞ SPCIMENS of the Whole (except the Thumb Screws, the Sight of which it is thought would too deeply wound the Feelings of thoſe not inclined to purchaſe) are NOW exhibiting on the Exchange.

[1] 'The Hobhouse Papers', Vol. 13, undated, but about 1805 from its place in the records (BCL, *Jefferies Collection*, B7957).

Appendix 47: Pamphlet against a proposed investigation, 1789[1]

At a General Meeting of the Planters, Merchants, and Others, interested in the West-Indies, held at the London-Tavern, May 19, 1789 (backed by a one very similar, but less complete, from those in Bristol and its Vicinity)

Resolved

I. That Slavery has existed, as a condition of Mankind in Africa, from the earliest times, before the Europeans arrived on the Slave-Trade on the Western Coast f the Continent.

II. That, of the Slaves purchased by the British Merchants, Part appear to be Prisoners of War, who would otherwise be massacred on the Spot, or Sacrificed to the Superstition and Cruelty of their Conquerors. The others are Convicts, whose Punishments are commuted from Death to Slavery. Others, again, are orb Slaves, of made so for Debt.

III. That a Trade to Africa cannot be carried on to any great Extent or national Advantage except in the Article of Slaves, the Purchase of which does not necessarily tend to promote Wars among the Natives or retard the Progress of Civilisation.

IV. That the proprietors in the Sugar-Colonies have an equal Right with all the other Subjects of the Realm to be protected in the free Enjoyment of a Property legally acquired.

V. That their Title to the Property they possess is founded on Grants and Sales of the Crown, and on Charters and Acts of Parliament.

VI. That the Capital now vested in the Sugar-Colonies, in Lands, Negroes, Buildings, live and dead stock, amounts to Seventy Millions of Pounds Sterling.

VII. That the Value of the Whole depends solely on the cultivation of the Lands; and system, therefore, which tends to deprive the Proprietors of the Means of Cultivation, affects and depreciates the Value of this Capital.

VIII. That it has been the universal Practice from the Infancy of the Colonies, in all the Islands, British and Foreign, to cultivate the Lands by Negroes.

IX. That the Constitution of Europeans has been found, by Experience, to be unequal to the Labours of Agriculture in the Wes-Indies; and, consequently, if sufficient Supplies of Negroes cannot be procured for that Purpose, Cultivation cannot proceed.

X. That, from natural Cases and accidental Calamities to which the West-India Islands are unfortunately subject, there is a constant, and at Times a rapid, Decrease in the Number of Negroes, which cannot be guarded against or provided for by Births.

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[1] *Pamphlet against a proposed investigation by the House of Commons, 1789* (BRO, SMV/7/2/1/15/15).

XI. That to depend solely on internal Negroe-population, for Cultivation, is to refit the Interests not only of the Plants but also of the Mortgagees, Annuitants, Femmes Couvertes, Widows, Infants, and various other West-India Creditors, in Great Britain, on the uncertain Issue of an untried, speculative Experiment, which, if it fails in the Ends proposed, must cause great Loss, if not total Ruin, to Numbers of innocent Individuals, who are Purchasers, for a valuable Consideration, on the Faith of a System long established on the Colonies, sanctioned and corroborated by many Acts of Parliament.

XII. That the Manufactures, Shipbuilding, Navigation, and Revenues, of Great Britain, and materially interested in the Trade to Africa and the Sugar-Colonies; and as far as they are supported by it, must decline or prosper in Proportion as the Planters are enabled to carry on the Cultivation of the West-India Islands.

XIII. That it appears, from the Report of his Majesty's Privy-Council, that the Custom House Value of the Exports to Africa and the Sugar Colonies, in 1787, amounted to £2,306,959; The Imports from the Sugar-Colonies, according to the Valuation of the Inspector General, in 1787, amounted to £5,389,054, and from Africa £117,817, [total] £5,506,871.

XIV. That the Tonnage of the Ships cleared outwards in the Sugar-Colonies and entered inwards from Africa, in 1787, amounted to 249,351 Tons. The Seaman in the West India Navigation alone, amount to 21,000 men And the Revenue, in 1787, amounted to £1,627,142.

XV. That the West-India and African Trade is a Nursery for Seamen.

XVI. That the French now give a Bounty of 40 Livres per Ton on every Vessel fitted out from any Port in France to Guinea, and from 160 to 230 Livres upon every Negro imported into their Colonies.

XVII. That the Spaniards have recently opened several Ports in South America for the Importation of Negroes, Duty free, by Foreigners and in foreign Bottoms, expressly, as is declared by the Cedula, for the Encouragement of Agriculture in their Colonies.

XVIII. That the Declaration of the Minister, that no Compensation shall be made to the parties who shall be injured by this great commercial Revolution, - either to the Merchants and Manufacturers on the one Hand, although the Ships of the former are not calculated for any other Trade, and the Goods of the latter are most of them unsaleable at any other Market, or, on the other Hand, to the Planters and their Mortgagees, Annuitants, and other Creditors, - is of the most alarming Nature to everyone who feels himself interested in the Commerce or Prosperity of the Kingdom. For, a Declaration so repugnant to every Principle of Justice can only arise from a Sense of the Magnitude of the Mischief which eventually may ensue; and has a Tendency, if adopted by the Legislature, to prevent all future Reliance, in commercial Undertakings, either on the Stability of royal Charters or the Faith of Parliament.

James Allen, Secretary

Appendix 48: Estimated local employment by London firms, c. 1800[1]

	Opened	Closed	Maximum employed
Frampton Cotterell			
Hall	1753*	1864*	30*
Christy	1813	1871	200
Oldland Common			
Bicknell & Moore	1812*	1836	50*
Harris & Warner	1813*	1840*	12*
Watley's End			
Rickards & Morris / Powell	1770	1858*	20
Dando (+ Mangotsfield)[2]	1781	1831*	40*
Vaughan	1808	1874*	100
Willsbridge			
Mayhew & White	1800*	1843	15*
			467

* = Estimated

[1] Compiled from multiple records: Apprentice, burgess, census, BMD, cards, criminal, directories, enclosure, guild, lease, newspaper, parish, poll, port, probate, tax, telephone, tithe, wills (Ancestry, BCL, Blaise, BRO, GA, LGL, TNA) and business archives (CA, BRO, TNA).
[2] This Dando factory was managed from London and has only a family connection with the Bristol firm of the same name.

Appendix 49: Insurers of James Rogers' vessels & cargoes, 1793[1]

		Total £			Total £
Isaac	Amos	950	James	Harvey	800
John	Anderson	900	Thomas	Hill	1,000
I J	Angerstein	200	Thomas	Hobbs	1,650
John S	Barbe	200	James	Jones	1,600
Richard	Buller	300	Charles	Kensington	200
Hardin	Bumley	200	Paul	LeMesurier	200
John	Camplin	1,250	William Peter	**Lunell**	400
Robert	Claxton	300	John	Maxse	1,900
Thomas	Cole	300	James	McTaggert	1,400
Philip	Crocker	750	William	Miles	1,700
Capel	Cure	200	John	Nesbitt	200
George	Curling	200	John	Park	300
Thomas	Danson	1,200	James	Parker	200
Thomas	Deane	600	Charles	**Payne**	1,000
John	Dixon	200	Henry	Poole	200
Samuel	Donaldson	200	John	Prideaux	200
John	**Dowell**	400	Philip	Protheroe	400
William	**Dowell**	1,200	T S	Secretan	200
Robert	Dyer	1,700	George	Sibbald	200
William	Elton	2,000	Joseph	Smith	400
John	Erving	200	Richard	Symes	1,300
Walter	**Ewer**	200	John	Taylor	200
James	Fowler	950	Alex	Towers	200
William	Fowler	800	William	Turnbull	200
Joel	**Gardiner**	400	Anthony	Van Dam	100
John	Gresley	300	John Taylor	Vaughan	200
John Peter	Hankey	300	Richard	Vaughan	200
Charles	Harford	400	James	Whitchurch	200
			Samuel	Whitchurch	1,900
					£35,450

[1] Known hatters in bold (TNA, C 107/4).

Appendix 50: Slave & silk hats in Newcastle-under-Lyme, c. 1848[1]

The visitor from the Potteries will look in vain for any sign of the industry which he has just left ... the spectator may ... observe men with aprons, having the appearance of operatives in some textile branch of industry, lounging listlessly about the street corners.

Newcastle-under-Lyme is, in fact, the seat of a dying – almost a dead trade – that of the manufacture of beaver hats. Factories which once gave constant employment to hundreds of hands now provide fitful jobs for perhaps a dozen or a score; and workmen who were once engaged in the production of the most expensive hats, now think themselves lucky if they can earn a pittance by the manufacture of coarse felt 'wide-awakes', locally called 'caps'. The introduction of silk hats has been, as I understand, the cause of this revulsion in the trade. The old beavers have all but gone out of use. The cheap silk hats manufactured in London, in Lancashire, and abroad, have completely supplanted the more expensive article, and ruined the staple trade of Newcastle.

Without much difficulty, I found out an intelligent operative hatter – one of the few still lingering about the scene of their former prosperity, and striving, by the profits of uncertain and ill-paid labour, to make both ends meet. 'Out of the

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[1] Jules Ginswick, editor. 'Labour and the Poor in England and Wales 1849-1851', The Letters to The Morning Chronicle from the Correspondents in the Manufacturing and Mining districts, the Towns of Liverpool and Birmingham and the Rural Districts, Vol. II. Northumberland and Durham Staffordshire – The Midlands (London, Frank Cass, 1983), p 136, www.british-history.ac.uk.

multitude of people engaged in the hatting business twenty years ago there are now, I should say, hardly a hundred left in Newcastle. The trade is gone away and ruined. Since the cheap silk hats came in, hardly anything else is made. If an order does come, the wages are a mere nothing to what they used to be. The men struggle for the job and so bring wages down. I mean the few of us who are left. The great body of the Newcastle hatters are gone long since. There was not a living for them here. They had to take to all manner of trades – to do anything for a living ... A good many of those who had the means went off to America, and some had to go to the workhouse. Of the hundred or so who are still here, the most are making felt caps, and some few have turned their hands to silk hats; but the silk is quite a different trade from the beaver; and it is hard for a grown-up man who has served an apprenticeship, to set up and learn another craft.

'In the good days of the beaver trade, the hatters used to work, the most of [them in] a factory and a small number at their own homes, or in shops attached to them. These shops were principally at the backs of the houses. The owners of them were generally piece-masters, as they were called, and they had the privilege of taking apprentices. I am a piece-master; but of course there are no apprentices now. That is all over. The piece-masters worked for a factory. They got the material from the manufacturer, and took back the finished goods. Besides the beavers there was a common sort of hat manufactured to a very great extent in Newcastle. They were called 'stuff hats'. I have known a single firm here have upwards of 32,000 dozen of these hats

on stock. They were exported to America and the West Indies for the slaves. Thirty years ago the prices paid for making the bodies of stuff hats were 8s, 9s, and 10s per dozen. The same work is done nowadays for 2s 9d. The old prices for making the body of a beaver hat were 2s 6d, and 3s a-piece; they are now made for 14d and 15d and sometimes for even less than that ... The few who work at hatting have been regularly brought up in the trade. The wages that a man can earn at cap-making are very low; he might almost as well be idle. The bulk of that trade is in Lancashire. I have said that a body-maker is now paid 2s 9d per dozen. It takes a good week's work to make four dozen, and a very hard week's work to make four and a half dozen. But there is little work even at this price. I have had only two dozen for the last fifteen weeks, and there are many as ill-off as I am. A 'rougher' would be paid about 5s 6d per dozen, and he would 'rough' from three dozen to four dozen a week. A finisher would have about 3s per dozen, and he might turn out about several dozen, or rather more, a week. These are about the prices when there is work ... I proceeded to several small shops where the caps or wide-awakes were manufactured but found only one open. It was merely a miserable, crazy shed crusted over with dirt from long neglect. Four or five men were at work within it. They made any sorts of hats for which they could get an order; but the wide-awakes formed their staple trade. Working twelve hours a day, when they could get work, they assured me that they hardly earned 10s at week. The hours some of the men laboured, when an order came in, were excessive – sometimes from three in the morning till ten at night. 'But I might well conceive,' they added, 'it is not from over-work we suffer.'

Appendix 51: Settlement request for John Amos[1]

I wish you could prevail on the parish of Westerleigh to grant a Certificate for John Amos and his Family who are now resident in Newbury Berks, otherwise Newbury will forthwith remove him and his Family to Westerleigh, which will be a great hardship to Amos for he can get his livelihood and maintain his family very well at Newbury, but cannot at Westerleigh. He is by Trade a Feltmaker was bound to his father John Amos at Winterbourne and served his father there 'till within nine months of the Term for which he was bound, and was then assigned over to his uncle Gabriel Amos at Westerleigh and served him as his apprentice at Westerleigh during that term since which time he has gained no subsequent Settlement and it appears very clear that his last legal place of Settlement is at Westerleigh Aforesaid by serving the last nine months of this time there to his uncle Gabriel. I have examined him and you may acquaint Westerleigh Parish Officers that his Settlement is here. If he is removed it will be injurious to all parties for the reasons Aforesaid. The persons to be named in the Certificate are John Amos Elizabeth his wife, four children

Ch Griffith

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[1] BRO, P/W/OP/4/36, undated.

Appendix 52: Village populations, 1700-1881[1]

Available on thesis 'Excel (.xlsx) file'.

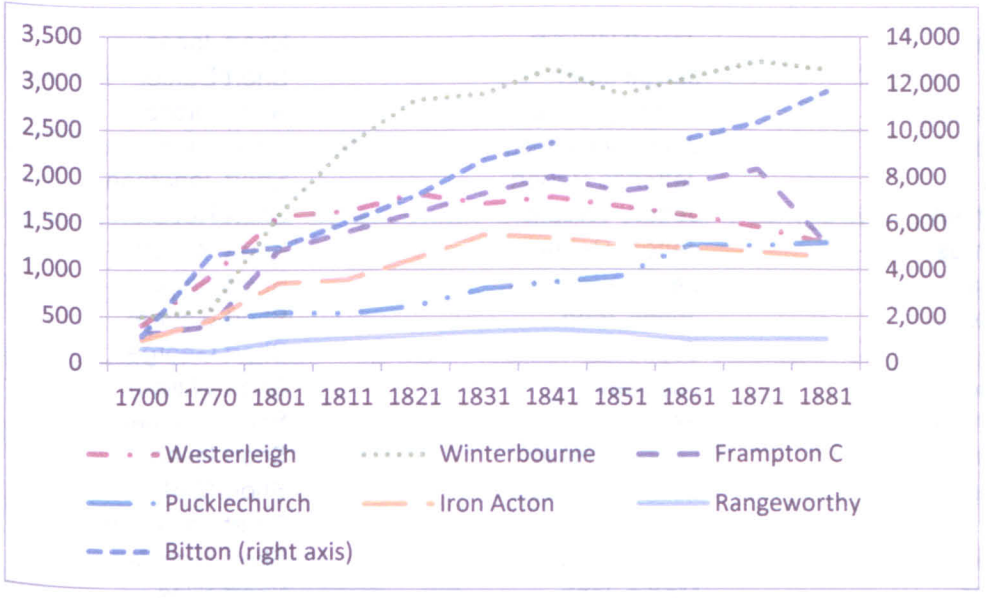

Figure 121: Hatting village populations, 1700-1881.[2]

[1] Rudge gives a population count village by village throughout the county for 1710, taken from Atkyns; for 1770, from Rudder; and for 1801, from the first national census (Rudge, *History*, 'Preface', p. ix; Rudge, *General View*), pp. 351-361. Later material from the national censuses to 1881.

[2] Collapsed scale 1700-1801.

Appendix 53: Hatters in the Bitton census, 1831[1]

Ball Thomas
Bran Betty
Bright William
Bryant George
Bush Giles
Cook Abraham
Cooper James
Curtis Richard
Curtis Hester
Davis John
Dykes Isaac
England Thomas
Evans Thomas
Fidler Joseph
Franklin ?
Fudge William
Fudge Peter
Good John
Green Charles
Griffiths [Walter]
Gringell George
Hall Samuel
Harding Joseph
Hardner John
Hawkins Richard
Henderson John
Hicks Jonas
Hicks Elizabeth
Hicks Jonas
Hignell Moses
Hopes George
Isaac Samuel
Jarrett Samuel
Jarrett William
Jarrett John
Jarrett [Janice]
Jefferey Charles
Jefferies Robert
Jeffery William
Jeffery Reuben
Jenkins Richard
Jones John
Joy William
Joy Henry
Kethro Luke
Leonard Isaac
Leonard Robert
Leonard Solomon
Maggs Isaac
Marks John
Middleton Edward
Morgan William
Moss Edward
Ollis William
Ollis George
Osborn Samuel
Osbourne Sarah
Perrington] [Edith
Pushey Charles
Secock Joseph
Short William
Short George
Short Peter
Short Daniel
Short Moses
Short Isaac
Short Jonas
Short Daniel
Short Jacob
Short Jacob
Short Jonathon
Short Robert
Short Robert
Short Stephen
Short George
Short George
Short William
Short Samuel
Short Isaac
Short Mark
Short Jonathon
Short Nicholas
Short Silas
Short Joseph
Short William
Stephens ?
Stone Robert
Warlock George
Warlock Samuel
Waugh Robert
Werrett Jonathon
Whipple Elizabeth
Whipple James
White Geo
Wiere Cornelius
Williams Samuel
Wilmott Samuel

[1] William Tyler conducted the 1831 census in Bitton. While names were not required by the government, Tyler recorded and kept those of the principal householders as well as their occupations. There were 107 hatters, 52% of those in trade in seven of the walks, clustered around Oldland Common. Of the 551 families, 201 of the principal householders (35%) were in trade, 118 (21%) in agriculture, 111 (20%) labourers, and 21 (4%) merchants (BRO, P/B/I/9a).

Appendix 54: Hatter baptisms, Bristol Diocese, 1813-1837

From 1813-1837, the complete list of 248,005 baptisms over twenty-four years and six months is transcribed and fathers' occupations are given.[1] Of these, 2,506 were in the hatting trade, approximately 1% at an average of 102 a year. The baptisms in the main villages are at Frampton Cotterell, 28.7%; Winterbourne (including Watley's End, but with only one baptism in Winterbourne Down), 24.3%; Bitton (mostly Oldland Common), 18.9%, nineteen Bristol parishes, 13%; and twenty outlying villages, 13%.

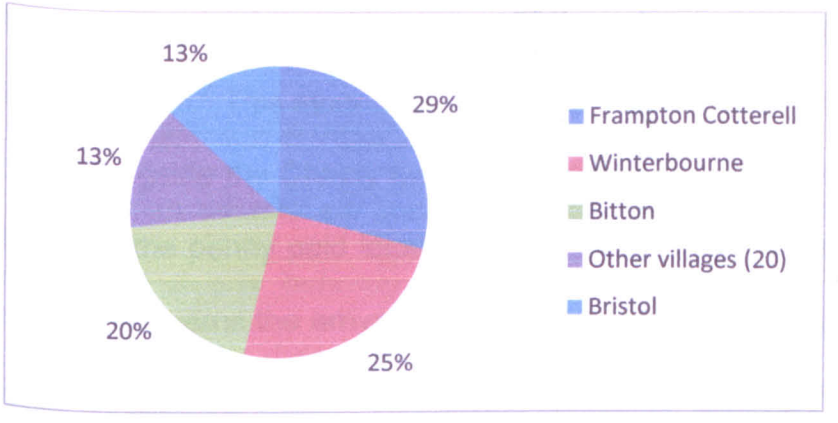

Figure 122: Bristol Diocese hatter baptisms, 1813-1837.

Frampton Cotterell	719	28.7%
Winterbourne	511	20.4%
Oldland Common	264	10.5%
Oldland	144	5.7%
Westerleigh	120	4.8%
Bristol: SSP&J	104	4.2%
Watley's End	98	3.9%
Bristol: St Paul	70	2.8%
Bitton	53	2.1%
Bristol: St James	46	1.8%
Hanham	45	1.8%
Kingswood	34	1.4%
Stapleton	25	1.0%
Cadbury Heath	22	0.9%
Castle Precincts	22	0.9%
Iron Acton	20	0.8%

[1] 'Index and Transcripts': Vols. 1-7, 1813-1837 (B&AFHS cd 2004).

Bristol: St Augustine	18	0.7%
Batch	14	0.6%
Mangotsfield	14	0.6%
Soundwell	14	0.6%
Bristol: Temple	13	0.5%
Bristol: St Mary Redcliffe	12	0.5%
Willsbridge	11	0.4%
Marshfield	10	0.4%
Bristol: St Thomas	5	0.2%
Warmley	5	0.2%
Yate	4	0.2%
Keynsham	4	0.2%
Bristol: St Peter	4	0.2%
Bristol: Clifton	4	0.2%
Bristol: St George	4	0.2%
Bedminster	4	0.2%
Bristol: Christ Church	4	0.2%
Bristol: All Saints	3	0.1%
Downend	3	0.1%
Easton	3	0.1%
Siston	2	0.1%
Rangeworthy	2	0.1%
Redland Green	2	0.1%
Northwick & Redwick	2	0.1%
Bristol: St Stephen	2	0.1%
Bristol: St John	2	0.1%
Bristol: St Mary le Port	1	
Stoke Gifford	1	
Frenchay	1	
Winterbourne Down	1	

Appendix 55: The use of mercury nitrate in English hat making

How mercury came to English, and possibly Gloucestershire, hatters, is a well-known tale; when it came is unclear. There are two stories about the introduction of mercury into the hatting trade and both may be true. The first suggests that, in Turkey, camel urine speeded up the felting of camel hair used in making tents. When the practice of using urine reached France, feltmakers used their own urine to top up the hatting kettle.[1] One man in a large workshop consistently produced a superior felt and investigation found that he was being treated for syphilis through a mercury compound inserted into his penis.[2] This story may not be completely apocryphal. In the 1860s the road alongside the Christy factory in Frampton Cotterell was known as Penny Lane for the penny paid local residents for a bucket of household urine.[3] The second concerns the arrival in England of the French Huguenots following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685.[4] Three refugee hatters made their way to Bristol around 1700 so what followed may have directly influenced the

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[1] Nick Howe, Denton hat manufacturer's family, also Stockport Hat Works Museum, conversation, 2007. Goldwater, *Mercury*, pp. 274-275.

[2] Ramazzini, *Diseases of Workers*, p. 45, wrote that Giacomo Carpi from 'his treatment of the French disease by these injunctions, made more than 50,000 gold ducats and killed a great many persons, though he cured the majority', citing Gabriello Falloppio, *De morbo Gallico* (1564). Goldwater, *Mercury*, p. 226, said the 'use of mercury in the treatment of syphilis may have been the most colossal hoax ever perpetrated in the history of a profession which has never been free of hoaxes'. The cult of Mercurialism held sway until well into the twentieth century.

[3] *Frampton Cotterell & Coalpit Heath, Images of England,* Frampton Cotterell Local History Society (Stroud, Tempus 2007), p. 59. Jeffrey Spittal, Frampton Cotterell historian, conversation, 2008.

[4] The French ambassador, M. Dusson de Bonrepaus, letter from London, 11/2/1686. Bonrepaus was a 'former member of the French commission provided by the treaty of neutrality of 1686 to settle the ownership of the Hudson Bay area between France and England' (Grace Lee Nute, 'Father Hennepin's Later Years', *Minnesota History*, Vol. 19, No. 4, December 1938), p. 394. Bonrepaus knew the beaver trade and, by his work on the treaty, had a direct influence on the prosperity of the hat trade in England.

city and its village feltmakers.[5] In France, hat manufacture was 'almost entirely in the hands of the Reformed ... and they alone possessed the secret of the composition water [for the making of fine Caudebec hats] and this was lost to France for more than forty years'.[6] As a result 'the French nobility wore none but hats of English manufacture, and the cardinals of Rome themselves, sent for their hats from the celebrated [Protestant] manufactory at Wandsworth'.[7] The secret returned to France in the middle of the eighteenth century when 'stolen' by a French hatter called Mathieu, who 'had long worked in London'.[8]

When was mercury in use in England? The question is not helped by the continuing lack of appreciation of the poison and its effects. Its arrival in London around 1700 does seem consistently reported and it may have remained the property of the Huguenot hatters, not reaching the country at large. There also does seem to have been a hiatus after the absconding of Mathieu around 1750, which is strange if true as others would by then have understood the principle, but perhaps not the formula. Goldwater speculated

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[5] Jacques Jomas, registered 1701-1702, from Belmont-les-Valence (Drôme), Dauphiné province; Pierre Pudin, 1700-1748, Metz (Moselle), Loraine province; and Pierre Perpoint, 1699-1738, Chabeuil (Drôme), Dauphiné, province (Mayo, 'The Bristol Huguenots'), pp. 437-454; also (Mayo, *The Huguenots in Bristol*), p. 29.

[6] Weiss, *Refugees*, Vol. 1, p. 299. Also Nollet, *L'Art de Faire*. In France, 'the fluid was and is still called *le secret*, the process *secrétage*, the workers *secréteurs*' (Hamilton, *Industrial Poisons*), p. 255.

[7] Weiss, *Refugees*, Vol. 1, p. 299, citing documents communicated by 'M. Baru, Comp. Erman and Reclam: Vol. V, pp. 51-52; Vol. IV, p. 295'.

[8] Weiss, *Refugees*, Vol. 1, p. 299. Some versions have Mathieu as a French spy, chased to the channel port of Dover (Howe, conversation 2007). Weiss explains that Mathieu gave the secret to the hatters of Paris when he founded a large hat manufactory in the suburb of St Antoine. Poole, *History of the Huguenots*, p. 92.

on a reintroduction of mercury after 1830.[9] Is it significant that Thackrah did not discuss mercury among his hatters' illnesses in 1831? In 1879, there was no discussion on mercury in a section headed 'Occupations injurious to health' in the Chief Inspector's Report.[10]

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[9] Goldwater, *Mercury*, p. 273.

[10] W R Lee, 'The History of the Statutory Control of Mercury Poisoning in Great Britain', *British Journal of Industrial Medicine*, Vol. 25, No. 1, 1/1968, p. 52. Mercury poisoning was made a notifiable disease under the *Factories Act*, 1899. The *Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906*, but allowed personal injury claims from employees suffering from mercury poisoning, but it was never banned under English law (Bartrip, *Dangerous Trades*), p. 8; 'It Made Them Mad', leaflet, Hat Works Museum, Stockport; 'Mercurialism and Its Control in the Felt-Hat Industry', *Public Health Reports (1896-1970)*, Washington, USA, Vol. 56, No. 13, 28 March 1941, pp. 663-664.

Appendix 56: Inventory of goods, Frampton Cotterell, 1855[1]

Stock, fixtures, implements, etc, etc

Stuff etc

36 doz stuff and [chevy]	1⅜ oz
12 doz stuff and [*]	1⅝ oz
1 ditto	1½ oz
3 ditto	1⅝ oz

19 stopping brushes
3 hair bags
12 doz small bow strings
2 standing cloths

Police mixture	58 lbs
[Supp] mixture	1
[Chevy]	33¼
Brigg coney blown	12
ditto carrotted	2½

Sundries in warehouse

120 making blocks in two pieces
75 round crown in one piece
1 finishing bottom
3 pair finishing irons 12lbs
1 pair large scales
1 pair small copper scales
11 iron weights, viz 4x56lbs, 1x28lbs, 2x14lbs, 1x7lbs, 1x4lbs, 1x2lbs, 1x1lb
23 brass weights, viz 4x8oz, 5x4oz, 3x2oz, 2x1oz, 1x½oz, 4x¼oz, 2x⅛oz, 2x$^{1}/_{16}$oz
3 firebricks
1 glass tile
2 plumber's irons
2 plumber's iron pots
1 Turkey stone
9 box bow pins

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[1] Inventory of goods belonging to Messrs Christy's at their establishment, Frampton Cotterell, Gloucestershire, 13 July 1855 (CA).

1 piggin for maker's kettles
2 large slates
4 small slates
1 carpenter's bench
4 tables
3 floor boards to stand upon
2 ladders
1 pair steps
31 shelves
2 stools
2 glazed pans
1 pair new hinges
2½lbs copper nails
3 hammers
1 large wrench
1 pair pinchers
1 plumber's scraper
1 small wrench
1 large axe
2 augers
1 tar brush
3 candlesticks
1 tin funnel
1 large wool basket
1 box small tools - various
2 oil cans
1 mop
2 whitewash brushes
2 small tubs

Back warehouse: Fixtures

2 long benches
1 long rack
1 cockle
1 wheelbarrow
2 drew casks

The old clipping room

2 wire hurdles
1 bow
1 grate - fixed, 1 fender

The new clipping room

1 table
1 grate fixed, 1 fender

Sundries in large stove room

1 lead making kettle (not weights)
Sheet lead and pipe
4 brass cocks (useful) 4cwt.0.16
1 iron boiler complete
8 maker's planks - various
2 ladders
1 iron cover
2 furnace doors
58 pan tiles
14 flat tiles
5 sets fire bars in frame
30 long wrought iron bars
26 short cast iron bars
2 pieces of cockle top
8 flat wrought iron bars
3 fire grates
8 iron dampers
2 lengths steam pipe
1 fire guard
1 cockle and stand
1 large Arnot stove
2 shovels
a pick axe
Sundry tools
1 blank for window
2 lengths iron pipe
1 pump handle
1 grinding stone

Finishing shop

1 iron pan - lead cover
1 kiln fixed
3 finishing planks
1 table
4 shelves

Proof shop

1 copper with division
1 iron pan
2 lead pipes with tops
1 plank
Quantity of bows
Quantity of useful wood
2 ladders
2 coal baskets
1 tub
1 wood stand
8 old tin cans - various
3 stone bottles
15 boxes for stuff

Counting house

1 mahogany two flat desk, 1 stool
1 tin force pump
1 brass pump bucket
4 note files
a fire grate
1 blower
1 iron fender, 1 shovel, 1 poker
1 floor board to stand on
1 turn up bench
2 balls twine
6 yards bason cloth [& ditto]

Bow garretts over warehouse

26 hurdles
15 harding cloths

25 maker's boxes
1 small tub

Bow garretts over Holder's shop in front next the road

31 hurdles

Making shop next water tank (this shop not used)

2 lead kettles with 14 planks, water pipes and tubs complete
2 lengths of large service pipes and brass cocks

Making shop next the stove

2 lead kettles with 16 planks, water pipes and tubs complete
1 water cask
1 iron furnace

Yard next the counting house

1 large water butt and stand

Yard next the warehouse

1 water butt

Steaming shop

1 wood bench fixed

Furniture, etc

One four posted bedstead with [moreen] furniture
Wool mattress, feather bed, bolster and two pillows
Seven blankets, six linen sheets
One bolster cover, six pillow covers
Two printed counterpanes
Six Diaper towels, two toilets
One tent bedstead, feather bed and bolster, pillow, two small blankets, two cotton sheets, one grey cover, and one pillow case
One mahogany chest of drawers with swell front and wood knobs
One swing looking glass with mahogany frame and broken slab

One mahogany dressing table
One mahogany wash hand stand with blue jug and bason, glass water bottle and tumbler
Two chambers, one cover pail, bedroom carpets
Nine cane bottom chairs with loose cushions
Six mahogany chairs with hair seats
One mahogany dinging table
Two diaper linen table cloths
One chimney looking glass
One turkey carpet and hearth rug of the same
One bureau
Four window blinds and rollers
One dresser with shelves
One safe
One set of china except two saucers and plates (the saucers were broken in the carriage from London and the plates never sent)
Three trays
One metal teapot
Six wine glasses, six cut tumblers, one set of cruets
Two cover dishes - three meat ditto
Twelve dinner plates, twelve pie ditto
Three jugs
Two dozen knives and forks, half dozen small ditto, one carving knife and fork
Two tea canisters, two sugar boxes, four baking tins
One tea and coffee kettle
Six saucepans, one fish kettle, four small tin cans, one tin pot
One dripping dish and spoon, one tin dish
One Dutch oven
One draining spoon, one flour dredger, one water can, one cullender
One oven grating
One candle box, one pair of brass candlesticks, one pair of tin ditto
One glass lantern
One iron fender (kitchen).

The high winds blew down the brickwork in the master bedroom which blocked up one of the windows and broke the looking glass to pieces.

William Axon
[Christy's manager: *1851: Stuff hat maker, Wood End, Frampton Cotterell, b. c. 1793 Stockport, d. probably 1854].*

Memorandum

J Holder occupies the whole of the ground floor in the front next the road at £12 per annum. We allow him room in the barn for his straw and crates - and the cart shed for his use - but these are not mentioned in the agreement. [Master hatter employing 16 men]

The land let to Robert Hathway Jr at £16 per annum from Lady's Day 1854 - Hibbs having given up the land and gone to America. (The agreement sent down R Hathway has signed and kept.) [Hathway senior a hat maker at Goose Green in 1861; junior a butcher at Frampton End]

Owing by and to Christy & Co

Leonard - blacksmith and carpenter: We owe him for iron work to wheelbarrow and he owes us 3s for two loads of sifted ashes. [Carpenter from Westerly in 1861, living in Church Lane]
W Gibbs owes1s 6d for one load ashes [William Gibbs, farmer of 225 acres in 1861 at [Perrin] Pit Farm]
Farmer: We owe for 2 baskets - 2s 6d to 3s. [Possibly Henry, a carrier working on own account, living at Harris Barton]
No bills owing for straw, coals or carriage.

10/7: We paid ½ year's Property Tax £1.6.3 due 20 Mar & 1s 9d due 20 Mar Roach cottage [George Roach, a hat maker from Iron Acton - cf Charles - living a few doors away in 1861]

Assessment 7/6 50	Works & House	£33.15.0
	Cottage	£ 2. 5.0
	Land	---

Appendix 57: Hatter insanity and suicide, 1816-1891

Solomon Short from Bitton was a hatter around 1816 who, in 1827, was declared insane. His incarceration at the Gloucester Asylum at Wootton cost Bitton's overseers sixty pounds, at a weekly cost of twelve shillings. His escape cost a further £5 6s 8d which included paying for the arresting constable in Winterbourne, a broken window in the Bitton poor house, and three staples for chaining him.[1]

A review of the census records of the Stapleton 'licensed madhouse and asylum for the poor', the nearest for the northern hatting villages, provides little information. In 1841, of its thirty-two male patients, none were hatters. In later years, unless occupations were given there is no way to identify inmates as they were recorded only by initials or first names.[2]

Charles Croome, a journeyman in Frampton Cotterell in 1860, swallowed a shilling's worth of laudanum after he had, for three months, 'given way to intemperate habits, neglected his work and made away with all he possessed'. He recovered after a timely intervention and the local newspaper hoped that his 'narrow escape will be the means of leading to more temperate habits'.[3]

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[1] BRO, P/B/OP/6h/4.
[2] 1841-1881 censuses.
[3] *BM*, 10/3/1860.

Henry Hollister, aged thirty, a hatter in Watley's End, hanged himself in 1868 in the top garret of his father's shop where he worked.[4] The twelve-man jury, mostly hatters, and some family, heard that Hollister was found 'hanging by a double rope [and] his feet just touched the floor and if he wished he could have saved himself'. Under the arrangement of the day, the body was before them in its coffin. Hollister had 'brain fever' as a fourteen-year-old and he spent time in Gloucester Lunatic Asylum where he constantly saw 'insects, reptiles and devils'.[5]

Ambrose Maggs, a life-long Watley's End hatter and stalwart of the United Free Methodist Chapel, was, at 84 years, classed as a lunatic and was housed at Stapleton Asylum in 1891.[6]

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[4] The father, William Hollister, occupied the old Vaughan hat factory and was described as 'very rheumatic'.

[5] 30/11/1868, *Coroner's inquest notes* (GA, CO/1/1/14/D/15). Case notes to 24/8/1868, Gloucester Lunatic Asylum (GA, 4820).

[6] 1891 census. Also in the workhouse was George King, an aged journeyman feltmaker from Watley's End.

Appendix 58: Hatters' argot and technical terms, 1700-1850[1]

Advance (n,)	Increase
Ask for (v.)	To be recommended to a master for work by one of the workmen
Asking card (n.)	Forerunner of the 'blank', before 1798
Bag (n.)	Unemployed
Ball (v.)	To proof hats with a compound of rosin and beef suet
Bason (n.)	A bench fitted with an iron plate filled with water and heated underneath
Bason (v.)	First stage of compressing a batt through heat
Batt (n.)	Opening out fur, usually triangular, to be made into a hood
Battery (n.)	Heated metal vessel surrounded by mahogany planks for planking
Blank (n.)	Signed declaration of good character for a hatter on the tramp
Block (n.)	Wooden shape to the exact style and size of hat required
Block (v.)	To force a hat hood over a wooden block to acquire a hat shape
Body (n.)	A felted hat hood ready for finishing
Bow (n.)	Hatter's tool for working fibre to make a batt
Bow-stick (n.)	Small wooden peg for plucking the bow
Brother Trade (n.)	A fellow feltmaker or hatter
Bugging (v.)	To steal hat fur for resale or personal use
Bunny plucking (v.)	Pulling fur from rabbits
Caulk (v.)	To make a comment perceived as insulting
Caulker (n.)	A challenge, fighting talk
Capade (n.)	A batt
Carrot (v.)	Treat fur, often with a mercury solution, to improve adhesion of the fibres
Cordie (n.)	Basic felt hats made of wool, first made in Caudebec-en-Caux near Rouen
Commander (n.)	Thread used to force a hood over a block
Congress (n.)	Highest national meeting of the hatters
Corker (n.)	A slight to a hatter
Creep (v.)	Guilty of privately speaking to master; sneak
Crozing (v.)	Realigning felt during basoning to prevent creases
Curl (v.)	To shape the final brim with irons
Dozen ale (n.)	Payment in drink for first attendance at a dozening
Dozening (n.)	Arbitrating. Middle hatters' court formed by men from nearest seven shops
Drab (adj.)	The natural colour of a hat before dyeing
Dry garnish (n.)	Money paid instead of drink
Dye cage (n.)	Open iron cage containing hats and lowered into a vat of dye
Fair master	One who has served an apprenticeship or worked for seven years
Fancy gallon (n.)	Due for first time of working on a silk hat
Finisher (n.)	Prepares a felt hood for sale as a hat
Foul (adj.)	Workplace or man unacceptable to hatters
Form (in) (adv.)	Applying for work in the correct manner
Fraternity (n.)	Fair hatters

[1] Sources: W J Ashley, 'Journeymen's Clubs', *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 12, No. 1, March 1897, pp. 128-140; Aspinall, *Trade Unions*; *BM*; Burn, Glimpse; *CA*; Giles, 'Felt-Hatting'; Grose, *Vulgar Tongue*; *HG*; HCJ; Housley, *Development*; Lloyd, *Treatise on Hats*; McKnight, *Stockport Hatting*; Rule, *Experience of Labour*; Rule, *Labouring Classes*; *St James Chronicle*; Smith, *Hat Trades*; Smith, *Hatters*; *Stockport Advertiser*; Turner, *First Shop*; Webbs, *Trade Unionism*.

Garnish (n.)	Drink required by an event: maiden, marriage, apprentice garnish
Garrat ale (n.)	Payment in drink for first attendance at a garrat
Garrat Match (n.)	Lowest court of the hatters with power of fine from two to ten shillings.
Gave the Bag (v.)	To leave work
Hab (v.)	Inspect a hat
Hat (v.)	To work as a hatter
High court (n.)	General assembly of hatters
Hood (n.)	The basic felt hat before being shaped on a block; a body
Hop of the cage (n.)	Employed and settled
Hurdle (n.)	Table of slatted wood used by the feltmaker to made a batt with a bow
Insist (1 n.)	A fine given to a young worker to extract money for a drink
Insist (2 n.)	Bringing the maker of a perceived slight before a hatter's court
Johnny (n.)	Any alcoholic drink
Johnny boy (n.)	Boy employed by hatters to fetch drink
Junction (n.)	Agreement on any issue between makers and finishers
Kettle (n.)	Heated water surrounded by planks for hand felting
Knobstick (n.)	A foul man, usually when he becomes a strike breaker.
Knock off (n.)	Strike. Often used to get rid of female workers
Larking (n.)	Insulting behaviour
Lure (v.)	To improve the hat surface with brushes or hot irons
Money turn	Money paid to a tramping hatter when no work is available
Mulet (n.)	Hatter's fine
Nap (n.)	The cut of the finished felt
Noil (n.)	Unwanted sorter pieces of wool
Off (adj.)	Failed to *serve turn*
Open out (v.)	Fluff up the fibre with a bow to make a batt
Pad (1 n.)	Gaining work while on the tramp sufficient to provide money and rest
Pad (2 n.)	Taking finished work from home to an employer
Piece worker (n.)	Hatter paid by the dozen felts / hats
Plank (n.)	Planks leading to a kettle
Plank (v.)	To apply hand pressure under heat to a felt hood
Plank ale (n.)	Payment in drink for first job at a plank
Plank gallon (n.)	Payment to occupy a vacant plank
Planker (n.)	One working at a plank
Plated (adj.)	A hat with a napping of beaver over a wool body
Pounce (v.)	To rub with pumice stone to make a coarser nap
Roll off (v.)	Pressure a felt with a wooden pin on a plank
Rolling in (v.)	Covering one sort of fur with another of higher quality
Ruff (v.)	To add animal fur to a smooth lower-quality felt body
Scale (n.)	Weight of fur or wool give to a hatter to make hoods
Secretage (n.)	An application of mercury salts diluted with nitric acid
Serve turn (v.)	Be introduced by a hatter to his foreman and approved for work
Shopped (n.)	Employed
Shop (n.)	Workshop
Short turn (n.)	Local hatter who took a tramp visiting for work
Singe (v.)	To flame off excessive felt from the hat
Singeing boy (n.)	Young, cheap labour used for singeing hats and general errands
Stamper (n.)	Piece of iron or copper used to beat down over the commander
Stiffen (v.)	To harden a hat using tar or glue and, later, gum or shellac
Stove (v.)	To dry hats in a kiln

Stuff (n.)	A combination of fine wool and the fur of animals
Suit (n.)	Five dozen hats in a dye cage
Taper (v.)	Decline gradually as with a strike
Tippers off (n.)	*Finishers*
Tippling (n.)	Fine of a hatters' court spent on drink
Thirst after (v.)	Work for a conviction of a hatters to get a fine for tippling
Tops (n.)	Lengths of wool needing to be cut to length
Tramp (v.)	To walk from town to town in search of work
Treating off (n.)	Money drunk instead of paid to a new employee
Trim (v.)	To protect with paper as the lining, leather and bindings were added
Turn (n.)	*Emolument to out-of-work hatter who was part to a combination*
Turn-house (n.)	Meeting place, usually an inn, where a tramp hatter presented
Turnout (n.)	Strike
Truck (n.)	Payment in kind instead of money
Under whimsey (adv.)	To be apprenticed
Walking money (n.)	Amount paid by manufacturer to hatter to use third party premises
Weighing out a corker (v.)	Bringing the maker of a perceived slight before a hatter's court
Whimsey (n.)	Apprentice
Whimsey master (n.)	Apprentice master
Whimseying (v.)	To work as an apprentice
Wool former (n.)	Machine from 1825 for forming wool bodies
Work up (v.)	Make a felt hat hood

Appendix 59: Laws and customs of journeymen hatters, 1819[1]

First: No man shall work as a maker or finisher unless he has served an apprenticeship of seven years to what is called a fair master.

Second: To be a fair master and entitled according to the rules of the trade to take an apprentice he must have manufactured his own Hats, seven years prior to the taking, or otherwise have served a fair seven years' apprenticeship himself to the trade.

Third: Whether there be one, two or more in a manufacturing firm, that firm are not to have more than two apprentices at one time.

Fourth: There are a number of masters who do not manufacture their own 'stuff', but are employed by a 'Great Houses', who, although they have a right, by law, to take apprentices, yet those apprentices, by reason of their masters not working their own materials, are never admitted to stand by the side of fair men, on which account they must ever continue foul, and debarred of the usual privileges, or submit to a second apprenticeship. This is a case that frequently occurs, indeed, it is no uncommon thing to see a man with a wife and half a dozen children, himself nearly thirty years old, serving a second apprenticeship for a fair time. The hardship of this must be admitted, inasmuch as it is punishing a man for a fault he never committed.

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[1] Lloyd, *Treatise on Hats*.

Fifth: A *foul man* is one that has not served his apprenticeship agreeably to the rule of the trade, or has been guilty of some act detrimental to the *supposed* interests of the journeymen in general. These are called 'knobsticks'.

Sixth: A fair man has the privilege of what is called *'turns upon tramp'*, that is, if he cannot work within the town where he resides, or has an inclination to *travel,* he may journey or *tramp* to the next; should any of the *fraternity* be there and he wishes to get '*shopped*' he is '*asked for*' by one in the factory (no man being allowed to ask for himself); if unsuccessful, there are two night's lodging for him, two pots of strong beer, bread and cheese, and a shilling or two to forward him to the next town. The *money turn* in London is five shillings, but no man is entitled to a *second* turn in one place, until after the expiration of six months from his receiving the first.

Seventh: If a journeyman has, by his own act become foul, nothing can absolve him but submitting to a fine, and this is measured according to the offence, which, in some heinous cases, such as 'creeping' into favour with the master, or going to work when all the rest have struck for wages, is as high as ten guineas.

There are three distinct courts for the examination and punishment of offenders. The *First*, of High Court of Congress, is a sort of general assembly, composed of either makers or finishers, just as their separate interests may

be concerned; but on all joint questions, these parties form a *junction.* In this court matters of importance only are discussed; as, for instance, the *advance of prices*, the abrogation of old laws, and the making of new ones, under the *operation* of which, it sometime happens, that both men and masters, as well as the law of the land, are alike the victims. The *fines* levied in this court are appropriate to special and '*striking*'; purposes, often tending to produce a '*combination*' of interesting effects. The masters too are not wholly exempt from these pretty little combinations, which, however, do not always realise or carry their intended *point*; this is owing (it is thought) to the vast affection journeymen bear towards their employers; indeed so much so, that they cannot bear that the *latter* should '*lower*' themselves.

There is a court below this, which is formed by taking one or two men from the seven *nearest* shops. Their sitting, if not *public*, is sure to be in a *public house*, president, *Sir John Barleycorn*. The matters chiefly brought here are those that relate to the misconduct of journeymen towards each other in the same factory, and which cannot be settled elsewhere they originated. This is called '*dozening*', and the power of *fine* extends to two guineas, which is drank in good old stout by the whole seven shops; but as all *dry* subjects are prohibited in this tribune, the extent of fine greatly depends on the state of the weather; so that is it be a sultry summer's day, the punishment of an offender is in proportion to the *sun's heat.*

The third and lowest court is an assembly of shop-mates only; this meeting is called a '*garret match*', and may be demanded for the punishment of an aggressor, by any aggrieved man in a factory. Power of fine from two to ten shillings.

I have before stated that there are in this trade, *foul* men; in point of number they constitute about one-sixth part of the whole; but their earnings, or price of labour, is the same as the fair trade.

A journeyman finisher in full work will earn, on an average, from three to four pounds a-week; while, on the contrary, a maker cannot get more than *fifty shillings*. This is a subject of much jealousy and discontent; nor is it likely to be otherwise, unless the other can raise himself to an equality with the former: against this there are obstacles; one of which is, the *increasing* foul trade, who would continue working, even though the fair men had '*struck*'. Another is, that they could never obtain the co-operation of the finishers, who, being amply paid themselves, think it best to leave well alone.

These are the *principal regulations* which govern the journeymen hatters, whether they have a good or bad tendency is questionable, there are many in the *trade* who decidedly condemn them, giving as their reasons, that they encourage idleness, tippling and endless quarrels. *Idleness* – inasmuch as when men are summoned to discuss the most trifling matters, even though the meeting be at five o'clock in the morning, they seldom feel *disposed* to

return to their work that day. *Tippling* – for the reason that, as *fines* are mostly spent in *drink*, the conviction of a supposed offender is generally '*thirsted*' after; but as the quantum levied seldom suffices, all further supplies for the remainder of the day are met by individual subscription. In these cases there is no show of niggardliness, as every succeeding gallon of the *sparkling 'entire'*, is but an *internal* messenger, bearing the glad tidings of another to come. *Squabbles* – because it is natural, when the *desire* for a thing is once created, and the gratification of that desire (where nothing of criminality attaches) can be indulged by having recourse to a little contrivance, that the opportunity of so doing should be more frequently *made*, than suffered to approach accidentally; which will account for the *trifling magnitudes* that are allowed to agitate shops and factories in general. The arguments in *favour* of these laws are, that without them, apprentices would be careless in serving out their *time*, the trade over-run with bad workmen, hats greatly deteriorate in the manufacture, the excellence of which is their chief recommendation in the foreign market, and the surest guarantee of the master's profit at home.

Appendix 60: Hatters' strikes, 1697-1907[1]

Year	Town	App	Chart	Comb	Foul	Union	Mach	Wages[2]
1667	London							1
1696	London							1
1753	Worcester			1				
1761	Newcastle							1
1763	Bromsgrove			1				
1764	Manchester							1
1768	London							1
1770	Southwark							1
1772	Manchester							1
1775	Manchester							1
1777	London	1						1
1777	Manchester	1						1
1780	Manchester			1				
1780	Leicester			1				
1783	London				2			
	Manchester							
1783	Manchester			1				
1785	Manchester	2						
	Stockport							
1786	London			1				
1791	Dereham							2
	Swaffham							
1791	Manchester	1						
1794	London			1				
1799	Stockport				1			

[1] Sources: Aspinall, Trade Unions; *BM*; CA; Dobson, *Masters and Journeymen*; *Ellacombe Papers*; *FFBJ*; Giles, 'Felt-Hatting'; Green, *Conflict*; *HG*; Kirby and Musson, *Voice of the People*; *London Daily Advertiser*; *Manchester Mercury*; *Manchester Times*; *Manchester Weekly News*; Molineux, *Macclesfield*; Prothero, *Artisans & Politics*; Rule, *Experience of Labour*; Rule, *Labouring Classes*; *St James Chronicle*; Select Committee (1824); Smith, *Hat Trades*; Smith, *Hatters*; John Stevenson, *Popular Disturbances in England 1700-1832*, second edition (Harlow, Longman 1992); *Stockport Express*; *Stockport Gazette*; *The Times*; Tufnell, *Character*; Turner, *First Shop*; Judy Vero, *A Concern in Trade: Hatting & the Bracebridges of Atherstone 1612-1872* (Warwickshire County Council, Warwickshire Books 1995); Wadsworth, Mann, *Cotton Trade*; *Westminster Journal*.

[2] Strikes over **app**renticeship, **Chart**ism, **comb**ination, **foul** shop, inter-**union** dispute, introduction of **mach**inery, **wages**.

1802-3	London		1		
1804	London		1		
1806	Macclesfield				1
1808	Stockport		1		
1809	Stockport		1		
1809	Manchester	1			
1809	Oldham	1			
1809	Oldham	2			
	Stockport				
1810	London		1		
1812	London		1		
1816	Chester	1			
1817	Atherstone	1			
1817	London				1
1818	Newcastle-u-	1			
	Lyme				
1818	Manchester				1
1819	Ashton-u-Lyne	1			
1819	London	1			
	Manchester				
1820	London		1		1
	Gloucestershire				
1821	London				1
1821	Stockport	2			
	Chester				
1825	London				1
1827	Edinburgh				1
1829	Oldland		1		
	Common				
1830	London	1			
1830	Stockport				1
1831	London			1	
1831	London			1	
1831	Lancashire			1	
1833	London	1			
1834	London				1
	Manchester				

1834-5	London				3			
	Atherstone							
	Gloucestershire							
1834	Oldham							1
1838	Dublin							1
1841	Denton			2				
	Manchester							
1842	Manchester		1					
1843	Stockport							1
1844	Stockport							1
1845	London							1
1852	Stockport						1	
1853	Stockport							1
1858	Manchester							1
1858	Gloucestershire						1	
1889	Stockport							1
1892	Atherstone							1
1907	Stockport				1			
		5	**1**	**22**	**16**	**3**	**2**	**30**

Appendix 61: Hatters' friendly societies, 1764-1870[1]

Town	Name	Start First	End	Location
Bitton	Friendly Society	1795		Swan
Bitton	Bitton Society			George Inn
Fishponds	Unknown			Full Moon Hotel
Frampton[2] Cotterell	Worthy Society of Felt-makers	c.1760		New Inn
Frampton Cotterell	Worthy Society of Felt-makers	1799		New Inn
Frampton Cotterell	Female Friendly Society	1809		
Frampton Cotterell	Benefit Society	1810		
Hambrook	Friendly Society	1798		Mr W Fugill's house
Hambrook	Unknown	1783		White Horse
Hambrook	Friendly Society	1812		White Horse
Hanham[3]	Friendly Society of Tradesmen	1764	1818	White Hart - the house of John Hearpath and also at the 'Widow Clark's'
Hanham	Friendly Society	1794		Crown & Horse Shoe
Hanham	Friendly Society	1798		White Hart - the house of John Hearpath and also at the 'Widow Clark's'
Hanham	Friendly Society	1818		White Hart - the house of John Hearpath and also at the 'Widow Clark's'
Hanham	Unknown	1795		Crown & Horse Shoe
Hanham	Hanham Friendly Benevolent Society	c.1830	1870s	Crown & Horse Shoe
Kingswood	Benefit Society	1807		House of Joseph Gage
Mangotsfield	Friendly Society	1777		Crown Inn
Mangotsfield	Friendly Society	1795		Salutation Inn

[1] Collected from GA, QRSf/2, unless otherwise stated.
[2] *FFBJ*, 16/5/1761.
[3] A slightly crumpled and damaged copy of the articles of agreement to be observed by this society at its inception 25/2/1764 is stuck inside the *Ellacombe Papers*, Vol 9 (BCL), p. 218.

Mangotsfield	Friendly Society	1810		Salutation Inn
Oldland	Friendly Society	1794		Crown & Horse Shoe
Oldland	Friendly Society	1805		Chequers Inn
Oldland	Friendly Society	1810		King's Arms
Oldland	Friendly Society	1812		Crown & Horse Shoe
Oldland	Friendly Society	1817		Crown & Horse Shoe
Oldland	Friendly Society	1823		Crown & Horse Shoe
Oldland	Friendly Society	1801		House of Nathaniel Williams[4]
Pucklechurch	Unknown		1865	White Hart Inn
Siston	Unknown		1879	Horseshoe Inn[5]
Soundwell	Unknown			
Stapleton	Unknown			Bell Inn
Stapleton	Unknown			Mason's Arms Inn
Stapleton	Unknown	1792[6]		
Wick	The Old Club			Crown and Dolphin Hotel
Willsbridge	Friendly Society	1797		Queen's Head[7]
Winterbourne	Friendly Society	1794		Swan
Winterbourne	Friendly Society	1795		George & Dragon[8]
Winterbourne	Friendly Society	1809		Swan
Winterbourne	Friendly Society	1815		Swan
Winterbourne	Friendly Society	1824		Swan
Winterbourne	Waterloo Club[9] (Hatters)	1815		

[4] The Williams family were the seventh largest group of hatters by surname in Bitton and Oldland Common and, while Nathaniel is not recorded as a feltmaker, an industry association remains a possibility for this society based at his house.
[5] The *Horseshow Inn*, Siston Common, one of the two major rabbit suppliers to the furriers.
[6] Eden, 'Rules', pp. 210-215.
[7] Wells, *Queen's Head.*
[8] The *George and Dragon* was kept in 1795 by hatter George Maggs - the Maggs family were by far the most numerous hatting family in Winterbourne and Watley's End. It is recalled locally that, after George Maggs died in 1808, his widow Hester shortened the name of the pub to the George; however, this was a failure as her soubriquet stayed with her till long after her own death.
[9] *The Stockport Advertiser*, 15/4/1831.

Appendix 62: Resolution of the Master Hat Manufacturers, 1831[1]

AT A MEETING OF THE MASTER HAT MANUFACTURERS.

This Meeting having been informed that the Journeymen have required from certain Masters in London the discharge of their Journeymen in the Country, on account of some dispute among themselves.

IT WAS RESOLVED,

That such interference on the part of the Men in London is highly improper and illegal; and this Meeting is determined to resist the same.

(Signed)

GEO. VAUGHAN, CHAIRMAN
WILLM. M. & JNO. CHRISTY & Co.
SAML. PRITCHARD & SON
WILSON, IRWIN & WILSON
JOSEPH ASHTON
JOHN & B. BOWLER
JAMES HALL & SONS
W. H. & J. OAKEY
PHILIPS, WOOD, & COLLINSON
W. G. DANIEL

EMANUEL COOPER
W. POWELL
JAS. ARNOLD
HIGGS, RANSFORD, & Co.
JOHN SOUTHEY
THOMAS SOUTHBY
VAUGHAN & JAMES
WILLIAM SWINSCOW
MAYHEW & WHITE
JAMES KNOTT

Museum Tavern, Blackfriars Road.
March 24, 1831.

[1] CA.

Appendix 63: Strike poster, Christy's, 1834[1]

A BRIEF STATEMENT OF THE SHAMEFUL CONDUCT

OF THE

Journeymen Stuff Hatters of London

AND

THE TRUE CAUSE OF THE STRIKE

AT PRESENT GOING ON.

This is no strike for Wages—no act of aggression on the part of the Masters—but a most audacious attempt, on the part of the London Journeymen Hatters' Union, to force a body of independent men in Lancashire, (200 miles off,) to join them against their will. This industrious and deserving body of men, work in the midst of their little comforts, at their own homes: they detest this Union because they know its object is to bring the work gradually back to London, which the arbitrary conduct of the London Union has driven away.

And will it be believed, in this land of freedom, that a body of London men waited on their employers a few days ago, and demanded of them to compel their Lancashire men to join the London Union, or to discharge them? and because an instant compliance did not follow the demand, they all left their Work in an unfinished state.

Now this independent body of men in Lancashire declare they will not join any system so hateful as this London Union; the laws of which, the expenses of delegates travelling about the country, the allowances for loss of time when employed about Union affairs, (which the agitators contrive shall be *pretty constant*,) allowances to the "clever men," all of which come out of the pockets of their poor dupes, and who obey implicitly all orders of the Committee; these are so oppressive, that the Lancashire men will not submit to them.

Between the Lancashire men and their employers the best understanding prevails; they are very industrious and get good wages, and it is no difficult matter to foresee, that they will, if they pursue their present good policy, get most of the "Making" into their own hands. They have their own system—their own union for the protection of their prices, and they work at their own homes; each man binds his son apprentice to himself for seven years, and teaches him his trade; his wife and daughters occasionally assist in the lighter departments of his work, and their earnings are from £2. to £3. per week. These men are generally very provident, and many have acquired Freehold Property, and have built themselves cottages and workshops: their cow, fat pigs, and well-stocked gardens, forming a striking contrast, indeed, with the poverty of these London Union men, who never teach their sons their trade, and thus, by their unjust laws, prevent the natural succession of men from coming forward, and thereby preserve their monopoly of *Labor*.

There are, however, many, even amongst these London Union men, who are heartily tired of the system, and who see that it will end in ruin.

Is there, then, a master in London employing Lancashire men who will sacrifice them to purchase a short peace with the London Unionists?—surely not! And it is a happy circumstance, that the greatest part of the London masters are pledged to resist their unlawful demands. The earnings of these men are enormous! The Carpenter finds expensive tools, and works for 30s. a Week; the Bricklayer for 30s.; the Wheelwright and the Smith; Trades very laborious, and requiring great skill; but these Hat Finishers earn nearly, or quite double these wages, frequently above £3. per Week; and if Trade Meetings, Union Meetings, and such other business did not divert their attention, they could earn still more.

And it is a remarkable fact, that, like all unjust combinations, in proportion to their weakness, these Unions increase the severity of their penal code; and their five guinea and ten guinea fines are the chief terrors of their system, and the overawe of the weak and irresolute portion of their body. A man cannot come and ask a master for employment, without being under a Fine of One Guinea.

However, this is the beginning of a better system, and without doubt, a Reform Bill will be passed before this turn-out is over.

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[1] The Records of the Worshipful Company of Feltmakers (LGL, Ms 00426).

Appendix 64: Reply of the London journeymen, 1834[1]

A paper having been industriously circulated throughout the country by some interested party, purporting to be "*A Brief Statement of the shameful Conduct of the Journeymen Stuff-Hatters of London, and the true Cause of the Strike at present going on*," but which is evidently intended, by gross misrepresentation, to excite a prejudice against the Journeymen Hatters of London, they feel, as a body, called upon in justice to themselves, as well as to disabuse the public mind, to contradict the fallacious statements which have been thus so treacherously, and without regard to any moral principle, put forth. The paper is neither more nor less than a tissue of facts distorted—plausible assertions, without the slightest foundation in truth—crafty interrogations and perverted calculations, strung together in a style of petty special pleading, which, although as shallow in substance as might be expected to emanate from a mean mind under the impression of sinister motives, might, nevertheless, have a mischievous tendency upon the interests of a large body of men, whose chief property consists in their reputation, and who only desire to be afforded the means to labour.

The paper commences with the broad assertion—"This is no strike for wages—no act of aggression on the part of the Masters—but a most audacious attempt, on the part of the London Journeymen Hatters' Union, to force a body of independent men, in Lancashire (200 miles off), to join them against their will." This assertion forms the basis of all the fabricated details which the pretended "Statement" so impudently puts forth; and in proportion to the magnitude of its importance in the matter, so has the writer deviated the wider from truth. The assertion is a wicked and wilful misrepresentation, capable of sustaining the pretext for applying to him that epithet which so frequently gives offence to those who merit it; but instead of giving vent to language which might be provoked in cases of private injury, we will treat the question on public grounds, and content ourselves with confronting falsehood with truth.

The Journeymen Hatters of London are making no new demand on the Masters, nor are they seeking to impose any fresh restriction on their fellow-journeymen; they are asking merely for the continuance of that mutual understanding between Masters and Journeymen which has existed for many generations; and where the aggression now originates we will in course satisfactorily point out. When Hat-making became a native manufacture of this country, it was deemed of that importance in the earlier stage of its existence, that the Legislature enacted laws for the regulation of the trade; and these laws, in more modern times, became modified into certain arrangements which, by common consent, were in general mutually observed in all transactions between Master and Journeyman, and the same arrangements had been acted upon long anterior to the recollection of the grandfathers of the present race; and on this principle, and with this understanding, has every Master now living embarked his capital in the trade—and upon this principle, and with this understanding, has every Journeyman entered upon Hat-making as an avocation. The trade, in consequence of being thus early associated with the law, naturally led to a union or association of its members. But the Union is not of modern construction; it has existed so long, that the institution of it may be spoken of as a tradition. There is no London Union exclusively; it is now, as it ever has been, a union of the Journeymen Hatters of the kingdom. So that with equal propriety may it be said, that the metropolitan workmen, when they join, become members of the country Union, as to reverse the expression. The objects of this Union, from the long continuance of its operations, are so generally known as to require little explanation. A fund was accumulated, and still exists, by stated instalments from every member, and under proper direction is applied to the relief of individual casualties—allowance to the sick—the traveller is sheltered in a strange country, when by exigencies of times he is forced into the world in search of employment: in fact, from this fund the sick are succoured—the poor are clothed and fed—and, when life is gone, the last offices are decently performed at the Society's expense. This being the case, the Journeymen Hatters have always been accustomed to consider their Union as a national good and an individual blessing. It has preserved its members from mendicity or pauperism; and while it thus tended to uphold the banner of proper moral feeling of real independence, the country at large has been spared the burden in so many instances, through the medium of their parochial funds, of affording relief to members of the Union. Had they not thus prudently provided means from their own resources, they must, as was the case in other trades who had not taken this precaution, in a countless number of instances, become entirely dependent upon their respective parishes for support. The country workmen and the town workmen alike appreciated the benefits of this association; and now for the allusion to where the "*aggression*" proceeded from, and "the true cause of the strike." Some individual, or individuals, presuming upon the unpopularity of the word "Union" in some quarters, have come forward in an attempt to disturb these arrangements, which, as we have already stated, had so long existed; and as a first step towards their purpose, they call upon the men employed on their works, situated at a great distance from other employment, to have their names struck out of the list of members of the Journeymen Hatters' Union, and to sign a bond that they shall belong to no Union whatever, on pain of instant dismissal. The men, of course, resisted this act of tyranny, with the exception of a few individuals; and the London Journeymen, considering themselves bound to act with them, also turned out; and this is the "true cause of the strike!"

We may here very properly ask, to what party the phrase "*audacious*" is most applicable—to the capitalist, who, presuming upon his control for the time over the fortunes of several hundreds of his fellow-men, would insist upon their being deprived, as if to appear by their own consent, of benefits so desirable to the station of those who must live by their labour, or to the body of men who would prudently cling together in this system of mutual provision and protection from the casualties of human life? And let it be borne in mind, that this party could not have the same plea that others might avail themselves for pretext of opposition, such as those might have who were members of trades into which Unions were only recently introduced; but, indeed, the very act which has occasioned "the strike at present going on," furnishes a positive illustration of the fact, that had not a Union of the Journeymen Hatters already existed, they must have immediately set about the formation of one in self-defence against the capricious tyranny of such men, who, as individuals, would thus summarily deal with the destinies of so many human beings.

The simple statement of these facts might be considered a

[1] The Records of the Worshipful Company of Feltmakers (LGL, Ms 00426); also CA.

sufficient reply to the insidious allegations of the entire of "The Brief Statement," but that in all such cases where dishonourable motives instigate, minds so actuated are usually prolific enough to invent, and we will therefore notice a few of the writer's details. His next assertion is, that the workmen in the country "detest this Union;" and then follows another assertion, that the London men had demanded of their employers "to compel the Lancashire men to join the London Union." It is not necessary that we should notice the lame verbiage with which he accompanies these two pretended facts:—the circumstance of the men abandoning their work, rather than obey the harsh mandate of their employer to abandon the Union, is a sufficient answer to the first allegation; and the second is answered by the fact, that the London men, as a body, know no exclusive Union. From this he proceeds to throw imputation upon the plan of management of what he calls the London Union; and he arrives at the mean conclusion,—"The allowances for loss of time when employed about Union affairs, (which the agitators contrive shall be *pretty constant*), allowances to the "*clever men*," all of which come out of the pockets of their poor dupes." This vile insinuation to dispassionate reasoners will be satisfactorily met by referring to the actual mode of appointing the office-bearers, which is by a long established system of rotation, so that it can never be known who is to become eligible for office, nor who may not be elected. The labour of office is as equally as possible imposed upon every individual, and every transaction is brought before the whole trade: in addition to which, the association is not like as if of yesterday's formation, where inexperience on any hand could allow either of the mistakes of novices, or submission to imposition.

The next paragraph of this document is abstractly of a truly anomalous description. The writer sets off with unequivocal praise of some Lancashire men who have "their own Union for the protection of their prices." He says the best understanding exists between the men and their employers, and that they earn from 2*l*. to 3*l*. per week. We may therefore be led to infer that he willingly admits Unions cannot be so mischievous as some people would represent them; or we may understand, in another sense, namely, that a Union is necessary for the protection of the prices; but, however, that object also, by his own acknowledgment, of men so extensive as the Hatters' Union, there must necessarily be men of all habits and temperaments; but we have no hesitation in meeting the mean insinuation about poverty, by declaring, that as a body they are as industrious, and possess as much available property, as any other mass of mechanics of the same extent in the kingdom. The last position of the accusation, namely, preventing "the natural succession of men from coming forward, and thereby preserving the monopoly of labour," is undeniably falsified by the melancholy truth, that at all times are there to be found numerous persons in the trade destitute of employment, and others who are but partially engaged. If, therefore, the work to be done falls so far short of the number of workmen, how in justice can monopoly be applied to the object of their laws? The "Brief Statement," however, contains internal evidence, that in the levelling of this clumsy abuse against the men, the writer's real object would seem to be to grasp at a monopoly which the Masters would soon have cause to regret; for should he succeed in disturbing the present arrangements which have so long been respected between Master and Journeyman, it must inevitably prostrate at the feet of a few capitalists the trade of many Masters who are more limited: but as the reasoning on this point would lead to a lengthened digression from our present object, we will pursue it no farther at this time.

The next thing which the writer indulges in, is an invidious comparison of our wages with those of Carpenters, Bricklayers, &c., all of which he sets down at the rate of thirty shillings per week; and he says the "Hat-finishers earn nearly, or quite, double their wages." The trades which he has enumerated in this comparative view, it ought to be remembered in the first place, have much shorter hours, and regular hours to attend each meal intervening; whereas, if the Journeyman Hat-maker does ever earn large wages, it is by slavish labour of a long day, in an unnatural and unwholesome atmosphere, and which he never leaves either to eat or drink. But the real fact is, and is capable of easy proof, that their wages have been grossly overstated by the writer—the average wages of each Journeyman does not exceed the amount per week of any one of the trades he has quoted; and at any time were the Journeymen Hatters to work merely the same hours, their earnings would be less than any one of these trades.

is accomplished with the best understanding being preserved between the men and their employers. We do not intend to cast any imputation on the general character of our brother workmen in Lancashire, but when they are thus wantonly arrayed against us by this sapient writer to our disparagement, we trust they will excuse our dealing with the accusation as it ought to be dealt with. "These men," says he, "are generally very provident, and many have acquired freehold property, and have built themselves cottages and workshops; their cow, fat pigs, and well-stocked gardens, forming a striking contrast, indeed, with the poverty of their London Union men, who never teach their sons their trade; and thus, by their unjust laws, prevent the natural succession of men from coming forward, and thereby preserve their monopoly of labour." In the first place, the Lancashire men, by this "Statement," have earnings which exceed much the average of the London workmen (if the "Statement" be really just), but we would especially mark the ill-natured points of comparison which are dragged under notice in this crafty sentence. Let us suppose that one of these men, of whom there are only a very limited number, who have attained to the enviable station of freeholders, &c, were to come to town with the same amount of capital with which he began in the country, he would find that barely to purchase the lease of premises fitting to carry on a small trade, would cost more than the purchase of a country cottage freehold property—that the rent of a moderately small house and workshop, with the other burdens upon them for one year, would nearly defray the expense of building a cottage and a workshop in the country—that to keep a cow would be an act of unconscionable cost, and to fatten a pig an act of extravagance—to have a well-stocked garden, even were it possible, would be superfluous in the extreme, vegetables can be purchased so much cheaper than they could possibly be grown in London. Yet all this childish stuff used as reason have been brought as formidable charges against the reputation of the London men; reason they ought not to be considered, but rather to be looked at in the light of the ravings of a waspish adversary. In a body

There remains now but one more quotation to notice of this liberal document,—"like all unjust combinations, in proportion to their weakness, these Unions increase the severity of their penal code:" and then he says, "a man cannot come and ask a master for employment, without being under a fine of One Guinea." If the axiom with which he sets out in this sentence be at all to be taken as a standard, we may certainly infer that the cause of those Masters must have been weak indeed, who inflicted the severe penalty of dismissal upon such in their employment who would not sign an abjuration of the Union, to which they had belonged for so many years. However, to come immediately to the penalty of which he complains, the fine of One Guinea. On this point, with the same lack of candour which pervades his whole *mis*-statement, he endeavours to mislead the public mind, and would twist this regulation into an oppression. The regulation, if not introduced by the Masters, was introduced with their perfect concurrence. It is well known that the materials upon which the Hatter is employed in his manufacture is valuable; and to protect the Master from loss, they must be intrusted to workmen who are sufficiently skilful, and who are sufficiently honest. By this regulation, the best safeguard that could be adopted, it was supposed at the time, was devised, by which the conduct and capability of every new workman is guaranteed to the Master by some person in his employment, upon whose word he could place confidence; and the fine was imposed to prevent the regulation being only partially observed. The Master is thus protected against imposition from fictitious recommendations; and on the part of the man, he is at once supplied with a sufficient reference that secures him employment.

We have thus furnished our brief reply to the several calumnies contained in the "Brief Statement;" and we will leave the accusations and the defence before the public without further observation, trusting that we have done sufficient to unmask the design of the writer, and to place the Journeymen Stuff Hat-makers of London upon their proper footing, as well as having disclosed "*the true cause of the strike at present going on.*"

Appendix 65: London Manufacturers, 1753-1874[1]

Firm	Location	From	To	Connection	Emp.	Manager (1)	Manager (2)
Ashton, J		1831			20**		
Arnold, J		1831*			20**		
Bickerton		1834*			20**		
Bicknell & Moore	Oldland Common	1812*	1840*	Owner	50*	Frankham	Fudge
Bowlers & Jarrett	Oldland Bottom*	1834	1871*	Sub-contract	25*	Jarrett	Short
Bowler, J & B		1831*	1834*		20**		
Christy & Sons	Frampton Cotterell	1813	1871	Owner	200*	Fowler, L	Fowler, J
Cooper, E		1831	1834*		20**		
Dando, J J	Watley's End	1815*	1830*	Lease	20*	Smith	
Dando, S	Watley's End	1820*	1835*	Lease	20*	Maggs	
Daniel, W G					20**		
Eveleigh & Sons		1834			20**		
Hall & Sons	Frampton Cotterell	1753	1864*	Owner	30*	Parker	
Harris & Warner	Oldland Common	1813		Sub-contract	12*	Jefferies	
Higgs & Ransford	Frampton Cotterell	1808*	1833	Owner	10*	Palser	
Knott, J		1831*			20**		
Mayhew & White	Willsbridge	1797*	1847*	Mortgage	15*	Burgess	
Oakey, W H & J		1831*	1834*		20**		
Powell, W		1831*			20**		
Pritchard, S & Son		1834*			20**		
Rickards & Morris	Watley's End	1770	1863	Owner	20*	Powell	
Southby, J		1831*			20**		
Southey, J		1831*			20**		
Swinscow, W		1831*			20**		
Vaughan, G & Sons	Watley's End	1808*	1874*	Owner	100*	Francombe	Vennings
Wilson, Irwin & Wilson		1831*	1834*		20**		
Philips, Wood & Collinson	Watley's End*	1831*	1834*		20**		

[1] Firms: Those in **bold** indicate documentary evidence, no matter how slim. Other firms are taken from two handbills of two meetings listing resolutions agreed by the London master hat manufacturers met to discuss strikes affecting South Gloucestershire (CA: 24/3/1831, *Museum Tavern*, Blackfriars Road; 9/10/1834, *Wing's Hotel*, Stanford Street).
Dates: * Estimates. Those of the 1830s would certainly have been in place both before and after.
Employment: * Good estimates. ** Reasoned guesses.

Appendix 66: Gloucestershire men in Christy files, 1853-1871[1]

Name	Name other	Year	Mon	Day	A	S	Comment	£	s	d
Axon	W	1853	3	9			Sent Pickford's carriages from FC to Stockport			
Axon	William	1855	7	13			Inventory of Christy's FC			
Axon	Wm	1864	4	23			Speak to about fruit in orchard			
Bailey		1864	9	9			Assists JF with boiler			
Barber		1864	1	18			Taken on lately: will keep increasing quantity they turn off			
Barber		1864	1	18			Comments on new men			
Booth	C	1864	5	21		1	To say which hats out of each lot to come back stiffs. Proofing at home at 9d per doz			
Bowden	Wm	1864	5	21			One of 3 plankers taken on since April			
Bowyer		1864	9	9		1	& Shell, pointing & repairing premises. Paid by JF 11 August	4	4	
Brown	Daniel	1864	4	23			G Brown's son, 12 years, rather small for clearing up			
Brown	George	1871			1		Apprentice to Stockport on factory closure (George Brown letter)			
Bryant	Albert	1864	9	9	1		Ordered some [details not legible]			
Bryant	Albert	1864	1	27	1		15 years			
Bryant	Albert	1864	4	23	1					
Bryant	Albert	1864	5	21	1		Going on pretty well. Gave a felt hat. Yet with brother			
Bryant	Jonathan	1864	7	19			& 2 sons. New people			
Bryant	O	1864	5	21	1		Going on pretty well. Gave a felt hat			
Bryant	Oliver	1864	1	27	1		18 years, Nov 1864			
Bryant	Oliver	1864	4	23	1		12:8, 4 doz 9 odd			
Bryant	Tom	1864	4	23			Wants to go to London. Send his indenture to TW to look over. Same as his brother in London			
Bryant		1864	9	9	1				3	
Church	SJ	1864	4	23			Apprentice earnings to be posted every week			
Clues (?)		1864	1	18			Taken on lately: will keep increasing quantity they turn off			
Cordy	James	1864					Salary	5	8	
Cordy		1865					Salary	29		
Cryer	Julia						To Stockport aged 4, machine room. Father was the manager (1953 memories).			
Curtis	& Fowler	1864					Salary (£15 to add)	47	7	6
Curtis	E	1863	12				Two years' salary	78		
Curtis	E	1864	4	23			Query whether he has all the garden & orchard			
Curtis	Wm	1864	9	9			Done some painting after writing them not			
Curtis	Wm	1864	9	9		1	Declined putting up planks. Sent for Hollister			
Curtis	Wm	1864	5	21			To rejoin with his man at 3s			
Curtis	Wm J	1864	1	27			Poor notes about work on planking kettles			
Curtis		1864	7	19			Ordered of: 2 x 8-room, new planks, 1 x 3-room, old planks			
Curtis		1864	9	9			Spoken to about leaving			
Curtis		1864	4	23			Thinks a lad a 2s 6d he can do all clearing up work			
Curtis		1864	4	23			Wants better coal			
Curtis		1864	4	23			To be helped by Henry England			

[1] Taken from over one hundred documents in CA. Column A = apprentice; Column S = supplier.

Curtis		1864	5	21			Away ill			
Curtis		1864	5	21			No [gregg] been bought, can do without till Oct			
Curtis		1864	5	21			Send from Stockport a quantity of notes to give out to the man with their work for weights in & out			
Curtis		1864	5	21			Paid for Woodhouse & selves 10s, Fowler's boy 1s			
England	George	1864	4	23			Father of Henry			
England	Henry	1864	7	19			New people			
England	Henry	1864	4	23			Son of George to come and help Curtis per week		3	
F	J	1864	9	9			Paid Shell & Bowyer 11 August			
F	Jebahed	1864	9	9			From Yate, Boiler: assisted by Bailey & 2 men	2		
Farmer		1855	7	13			Owe for 2 baskets, 2s 6d - 3s			
Fidler	J	1864					Christy FC manager (reminiscences)			
Flower	George						Stockport foreman planker (1953 memories).			
Flowers	G	1864	5	21	1		Going on pretty well. Gave a felt hat. Doing better than he was			
Flowers	George	1862	6	18	1		Apprenticed to John Fowler, 7 years, expires 18/6/1869			
Flowers	George	1864	4	23	1		Older apprentice, 8:5, 3.6 doz, speak to			
Flowers	Samuel	1864	9	9	1				3	
Fowler	& Curtis	1864					Salary (£15 to add)	47	7	6
Fowler	Alfred	1871			1		Apprentice to Stockport on factory closure (George Brown letter)			
Fowler	Daniel	1864	9	9	1		Carpenter			
Fowler	George	1871			1		Apprentice to Stockport on factory closure (George Brown letter)			
Fowler	J	1864	4	23		1	Given felts to stiffen			
Fowler	J	1864	5	21			To begin proofing with his apprentice John Screen Tovey in cleaned out shop. Paid 9d doz			
Fowler	John	1862	6	18			Master of George Flowers			
Fowler	John	1864	4	23			His apprentice just 21 years, three years longer to serve working now in garden per week		9	
Fowler	Jonathan	1864	7	19			& 2 sons. To order the lead kettles			
Fowler	Luke	1830					Christy FC manager			
Fowler	Luke	1834	7	25			Christy FC manager			
Fowler	Luke	1834	11	20			Christy FC manager			
Fowler	Luke	1834	8				Christy FC manager			
Fowler	Luke	1834	10	10			Christy FC manager			
Fowler	Luke	1834	11	1			Christy FC manager			
Fowler	Luke	1835	2	11			Christy FC manager			
Fowler		1864	5	21			To write to Stockport about Hall's kettle after Parker enquiry			
Garlick	Charles	1837	3	2	1		Winterbourne, apprentice to Isaac Simmonds, Mangotsfield; paid by Miller Christy trustees			
Garner		1864					Board lodgings	3	10	
Garner		1864	9	9			Man (G Warren) to help			
Garner	& Maggs	1864						4	10	
Gibbs	W	1855	7	13		1	Owes 1s 6d for 1 load of ashes			
Gibbs		1864	4	1		1	Vitriol	9	9	1
Gibson		1864	4	23		1	Bristol, buying things now mainly from the North of England. Went to Hall			
Gingale		1834	11	20			Christy employee died			
Hale	& Hathway	1864					Rent of Premises £140 less paid by	20	4	
Hale	J	1865	1	20			Cash	1	5	
Hale	James	1864	4	23			In cottage, wants a pig cote			

Hale	S	1864	5	21	1		Going on pretty well. Gave a felt hat. Doing better than he was			
Hale	Samuel	1864	4	23	1		Older apprentice, 8:5, 4 doz, speak to			
Hales		1864	9	9			Two Hales. Trimmers for Stockport			
Halls		1864	4	23		1	Supplier			
Hardy	S						Went to Stockport. Father of W Hardy (1953 memories).			
Hardy	W						Son of S, foreman blower at Stockport (1953 memories).			
Harris	George Henry	1864	1	27	1		20 years, 17 Jul 1864			
Harris	Henry	1864	7	19			New people. Bound this day.			
Harris	Thomas	1864	1	27		1	Carter would carry goods 1s 6d - 2s 6d to & from Yate. Coals 1s 6d a ton			
Hathway	& Hale	1864					Rent of Premises £140 less paid by	20	4	
Hathway	Mr	1864	1	27		1	Will cart coals for 1s 6d / ton. Goods to Yate 2s - 2s 6d a journey Start 1 Feb			
Hathway	Robert jnr	1855	7	13			Land let to from Lady's Day 1854 per *annum*	16		
Hathway		1864	1	27			Trees to be cut in his field			
Hathway		1864	1	27			To have stone in field after C&Co take for kettles & wall repair			
Hathway		1864	4	23		1	To call about noon. Carriage of boxes, a larger cart sometimes			
Hathway		1864	4	23			To have straw shed and stable per year	1	10	
Hathway		1864	5	21		1	No of carting jobs a week: 1. Large load 3s 6d			
Hathway		1865	1	28			Cash paid	7	10	3
Hathway		1865	2	7			Cash paid	26	1	10
Hathway		1865	2	21			Cash paid	6	13	5
Hewitt	Mr Henry	1864	1	27			Knows Thomas Harris, carter			
Hibbert		1864	1	18			Men left or taken away or likely to be taken away			
Hibbs		1855	7	13			Given up land and gone to America			
Holder	J	1855	7	13			Has whole of ground floor in the front next the road per year. Room in barn & cart shed	12		
Holder	James	1858	6	8		1	Quote for hat making			
Holder	James	1858	3	17			Work progress letter			
Holder	Samuel	1818	7	14		1	Discussion on selling factory site			
Holder	Samuel	1818	11	5		1	Discussion on selling factory site			
Holder		1864	5	21			Away ill			
Hollister		1864	9	9		1	Sent for after Curtis declined putting up planks			
House	G	1864	4	23		1	Supplier, Howes			
House	Thomas	1864	1	27		1	Howes: Fur cutter, near FC has fur to sell & quantity of skins			
House		1864	9	9	1		Aged 15 - Howes			
Howes	Enos	1871			1		Apprentice to Stockport on factory closure (George Brown letter)			
Howes	John	1871			1		Apprentice to Stockport on factory closure (George Brown letter)			
Howes	William	1865	6	27	1		Apprenticed to Jos Green, 7 years, expires 1/2/1872			
Howes	William	1871			1		Apprentice to Stockport on factory closure (George Brown letter)			
Howes		1864	4	23		1	Edward Skidmore working for him			
Hoyle	Alfred	1871			1		Apprentice to Stockport on factory closure (George Brown letter)			
Hoyle	Harry	1871			1		Apprentice to Stockport on factory closure (George Brown letter)			

Hoyle	William	1871			1		Apprentice to Stockport on factory closure (George Brown letter)			
Hurndall	Hillier & Wills	1864	4	23		1	Methylated spirit, Castle Green.			
Hurndall	Hillier & Wills	1864	5	21		1	Wants 3s 6d for gallon neat spirit			
Isles	Alfred	1864	1	27	1		18 years, Dec 1865; been 3 years with George Philips			
Isles	Alfred	1864	4	23	1		11:4½, 5 doz			
Isles	Alfred	1864	5	21	1		Going on pretty well. Gave a felt hat			
Isles	Henry	1864	1	27	1		16 years, Oct 1864			
Isles	Henry	1864	4	23	1		Mark Isles asks for. To be with him until 1 Jul			
Isles	Henry	1864	5	21	1		Going on pretty well. Gave a felt hat. Yet with father			
Isles	Henry	1871			1		Apprentice to Stockport on factory closure (George Brown letter)			
Isles	Mark	1864	4	23			Asks for apprentice Henry isles			
Isles	William	1864	7	19			New people. To come & work every afternoon with his father			
Isles	William	1864	1	27	1		13 years, Apr 1864			
Isles		1864	9	9	1				3	
Jacobs	v ?	1864	4	23		1	Supplier			
Johnson	Elam	1871			1		Apprentice to Stockport on factory closure (George Brown letter)			
Johnson	George	1871			1		Apprentice to Stockport on factory closure (George Brown letter)			
Knight	William	1833					Weekly wages	131	17	3
Knight	William	1834	11	20			Luke Fowler unable to sell FC house - left FC			
Lee		1864	1	18			Taken on lately: will keep increasing quantity they turn off			
Leonard		1855	7	13		1	Blacksmith & carpenter. Owe him or iron work to wheelbarrow. Owes 3s for 2 loads of ashes			
Maggs	& Garner	1864						4	10	
Maggs	George	1872	1	27		1	Rabbit skin pulling contract			
Maggs	Henry	1864	1	27			Winterbourne: Poor notes about work on planking kettles			
Maggs		1864	7	19			Paid account	5	19	6
Maggs		1864	1	27			Let us know what required doing to roof, several jobs around the place			
Maggs		1864	4	23			Account. Examined all the work. The [shutes] are very good, kettles well made	39	4	3
Maggs		1864	4	23			Making 2 fine hand cases for Palser for Australia for his brother & son who are there			
Maggs	G	1864	4	23			Supplier			
Mais (?)		1864	9	9			Boiler: doing brick work			
Mathews		1864	9	9		1	Field: A plan of quantity and shape			
Ogden		1864	1	18			Taken on lately: will keep increasing quantity they turn off			
Palser	Mr	1864	1	27		1	Small manufacturer wants work for 7 men			
Palser		1864	4	23		1	Wants work, four men. Has been working for his brother in Australia, Could do 20 doz a week			
Palser		1864	4	23		1	Brother & son in Australia, see Maggs			
Palser		1864	4	23		1	Supplier			
Palser		1864	4	23		1	Says he proofs felts himself, spirits stiffening. Planks drabs in lead blue archel & corn blue. Better than indigo			
Palser		1864	5	21		1	Work given out to Palser and his four men			

Parker		1864	5	21			Will write to Hall's to see if they will sell unused fine lead kettle to Fowler			
Philips	George	1864	1	27			Three years master of Alfred Isles			
Phillips	Thos	1864	5	21			One of 3 plankers taken on since April			
Preston	R	1864	1	18			Men left or taken away or likely to be taken away			
Roach		1855	7	13			Occupies cottage: Property tax due 20 Mar		1	9
Roach		1864	5	21			To FC with Woodhouse & W & S Christy			
Rodman	George	1872	1	27			Rabbit skin pulling contract			
Rodman							Now lives in FC. His father & brother worked in FC factory (reminiscences, more detail)			
Rogers		1864	7	19			New people			
Rogers		1864	1	18			Men left or taken away or likely to be taken away			
Sergeant		1864	4	23		1	Supplier			
Seville	J	1864	1	27		1	Insurance			
Shell		1864	9	9		1	& Bowyer, pointing & repairing premises. Paid by JF 11 August	4	14	6
Skidmore	Edward	1864	4	23			Says can block there, there are 8-10 others who can block. Blocked 36 doz			
Skidmore	Edward	1864	4	23			Son of Edward, went to London to be a policeman. Hall saw him & took him to silk bodymaking			
Skidmore	Henry	1864	4	23			Son of Edward, cutting for with Howse. Gets about 12-15s a week. Got skins himself to cut			
Skidmore	Lucy	1864	9	9			Trimmer for Stockport			
Skinner		1876					Buys factory (1953 memories).			
Smith	Soloman	1864	5	21		1	Arrange by Woodhouse to point & whitewash at 4s a day			
Suffolk		1864	1	27		1	Yate, offers to takes boxes from Yate Station to FC			
Tovey	John Screen	1864	5	21	1		Apprentice to J Fowler			
Warren	G	1864	9	9			Man to help Garner			
Webb	Samuel	1864	9	9			Stoker / Dyer			
Wilcox	P	1864	5	21			One of 3 plankers taken on since April			
Woodhouse		1864					Expenses	2	5	
Woodhouse		1864	5	21			To FC with Roach & W & S Christy			
Woodhouse		1864	5	21			Arranging Solomon Smith to point & whitewash at 4s a day			
Woodhouse		1864	5	21			Accommodation paid by Curtis			

Appendix 67: Accounts for Christy's, Frampton Cotterell, 1864-1865[1]

1864				1865		
£	s	d		£	s	d
5	15	6	Insurance	5	15	6
53	2	6	Coals	48	3	3
13	6	1	Hauling	16	7	9
48	7	3	Carriage	48	11	0
14	19	6	Cartage	9	7	1
11	10	0	Brushes	6	18	9
47	7	6	Salary: Foremen	55	0	0
5	8	0	Salary: *Unknown position*	29	0	0
10	11	5	Taxes	13	12	0
8	16	0	Expenses to London			
35	9	1	Expenses to Stockport	24	19	1
3	5	5	Drugs			
16	12	9	Vitriol	7	14	8
13	17	0	Spirits	37	14	3
140	0	0	Rent of premises	140	0	0
	7	3	Candlestick			
17	12	7	Sundries	17	10	3
28	18	10	10% of 1864 gross expenses	28	18	10
			10% of 1865 gross expenses	7	17	6
475	**6**	**8**	**Sub total**	**497**	**9**	**11**
			Less apprentice earnings	86	17	9
20	4	0	Less cottage rent	20	4	0
455	**2**	**8**	**Total**	**390**	**8**	**2**

[1] CA: 1864: B/WW/4/29; 1865: B/VV/4/5.

Appendix 68: John Dando to the Countess of Huntingdon, 1771[1]

Most Excellent Lady [Details of hats and prices] Shall think it my Duty and Intress to go on the Best and lowest Terms possable I can. Mr Hawksworth have been greatly Blest among us and have been much Intreated by our friends to come againe but he says he is not his own. Therefore we Intreat your Ladyship to let him now and then to take a Round amongst us. Here seems to be a great Revival thousands flock after the Bread of life beside fresh places all Round our nabourhood that is set out for Zion with their faces thitherward, beside the great and wonderfull work at Wootten underedge chiefly by the Blessed Instrumenttalety of dear Mr Hill must conclude your Ladyships unworthy servnt Jn Dando.

I am also Desired by all our Christian Friends in the late dear Mr Whitefields Connecttions in these partts to send you our kindest thanks for this visit which you was pleased to suffer Mr Hawkesworth to make us praying all your Ladyships undertakeings for the Gospel may meet with many Blessings from our Lord. [Postscript] If your Ladyship have any Orders please to Direct to John Dando Hattmaker In Dursley Gloucestershire.

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[1] Letter, spelling unchanged, from Dando to Huntingdon, 17/11/1771 (Countess of Huntingdon's Archives, The Cheshunt Foundation, Westminster College, Cambridge, F1/141).

Appendix 69: Methodist chapels in the hatting villages, 1741-1900[1]

Village	Chapel name	Address	Denomination	Opening
Kingswood	Tabernacle	Park Rd	Whitfield	1741
Kingswood		Regent St	Moravian	1741
Downend		Salisbury Rd	Baptist	1786
Watley's End	Salem		WM	1787
Frampton Cotterell	Zion		Cong.	1795
Iron Acton			WM	1807
Brideygate	Ebenezer	The Common	WM	1810
Oldland Common	Tabernacle	High St	Ind.	1811
Whiteshill			Evan.	1812
Mays Hill				1817
Rangeworthy			WM	1820
Frampton's End		Church Road	WM	1821
Mangotsfield	Tabernacle	Cossham St	Ind.	1827
Hanham	Tabernacle	Tabernacle Rd	Tent	1829
Warmley Tower	Wesley	Tower Rd South	WM	1833
Bitton		High St	WM	1834
Kingswood		Two Mile Hill	PM	1841
Kingswood		Blackhorse Rd	WM	1843
Warmley Tower		Chapel Lane	Whitfield	1845
Frampton Cotterell	Bethel	Woodend Rd	UMF	1851
Hanham	Ebenezer	Chapel Rd	FM	1851
Kingswood	New Tabernacle	Regent St	Cong.	1853
Kingswood	Kingswood	Two Mile Hill	Reformed	1854
Longwell Green		Bath Rd	UMF	1856
Mangotsfield		Northcote Rd	PM	1857
Warmley Tower	Ebenezer	Tower Rd South	UMF	1858
Bitton		Mill Lane	UMF	1859
Cadbury Heath		Cock Rd	UMF	1859
White's Hill	Wesley Memorial	Bryant's Hill Rd	UMF	1866
Kingswood		Hill St	Cong.	1868
Watley's End	Ebenezer		UMF	1868
Mangotsfield		Cossham St	PM	1870
North Common	Salem		CB	1871
Oldland Common		West St	PM	1871
Hanham Green		Castle Farm Rd	UMF	1872
Longwell Green		Shellards Rd	M	1872
Kingswood	Bourne	Two Mile Hill	PM	1873
Kingswood		135 High St	PM	1873
Pucklechurch	Shortwood		PM	1876
Kendleshire			UMF	1876
Winterbourne Down	Bethesda		UMF	1878
North Common		Poplar Rd	PM	1879
Frampton Cotterell	Hebron	Ridgway	PM	1887
Warmley Tower		Mill Lane	Ind.	1899
Oldland Common		94 West St		?

[1] The multiple sources can be found within Chapter 10: *Prayer, 1739-1900*.

Appendix 70: Village occupation counts, 1841-1901[1]

Winterbourne

	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
Men in work	532	523	518	434	506	604	846
Women in work	48	119	187	144	235	281	403
Men: Farming	125	248	242	139	171	120	106
Men: Extraction	56	58	110	138	133	219	246
Men: Hatting	171	93	112	52	18	6	4
Men: Railways	0	0	9	2	1	6	141
Women: Clothing	2	38	74	64	108	198	253

Frampton Cotterell

	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
Farming	199	200	128	121	66	75
Hatting	125	71	42	22	5	0
Extraction	121	140	195	219	252	287
Domestic	70	72	63	81	90	102
Clothing	55	56	43	41	125	171
Craftsmen	42	19	38	38	60	45
Retailing	31	28	50	51	75	89
Labourer	23	3	28	43	35	40
Haulage	18	17	4	8	5	6
Medical	11	9	5	15	15	12
Professional	10	22	14	20	37	41
Railways	0	0	0	3	7	50
Total	704	637	611	677	773	915

[1] 1841-1901 censuses.

Appendix 71: Bristol hatting trade reports, 1873-1901[1]

1/12/1873

In this town which is fast losing its prestige as a centre of silk hat manufacturing, I find the greatest stagnation existing, and with the exception of one firm that has only started within the last four or five years, the greatest apathy and want of information in reference to what is likely to be in demand in the spring. Here the fall of silk hatting is simply deplorable ... No doubt the sale of felts at the present time compensates them from the fall off of silks; but it is well to remember that some day they must find great competition from the Northern felt hat manufacturers, who are daily increasing and are bound to go direct to the retailers. Already during the last few years more than one Denton house has done a considerable trade in the west of England. I think it is time the leading firms here should see if they cannot increase their silk hat business, instead of crying, 'Silk hating is going to the dogs'. Let them go more into the higher class of hats, and upset the tale that all retailers like to sell London hats. Let them pay more attention to the turn out and good workmanship of their hats, and local customers will not want to give their orders to London and Denton firms. The house of Messrs. Howes's is full of orders; though I regret to report the severe illness of Mr Gilbert Howes, one of the principals, which has necessitated his absence from business for the last two months; he is now at Torquay, trying if the air will restore him to convalescence.

2/3/1874

Having been present during part of the last election week in Bristol, I can testify to the hearty and good-natured manner in which the usual retorts were made and received by Whig and Tory. Many of the leading hat manufacturers take an active part in politics and rightly so. ... I met many canvassing from house to house ...Having had a passing view of the extensive works now building for Messrs. Howes, I can safely say that they will bear comparison with any Lancashire or

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[1] *The Hatter and Umbrella Trade Circular* (later *HG*), monthly trade journal, reports (Wardown Park Museum, Luton).

Cheshire factory of felt hats, both as regards size or beauty of design. They show what practical experience, combined with perseverance and industry can achieve.

Frome: Messrs W Portman and Co of this town, silk and felt hat manufacturers, are very full of orders. They have a most convenient and well adapted factory, both for silk and felting; and besides doing a London trade have an old-established connection in the West of England.

28/2/1877

The hatting trade is certainly a growing trade here, and it has assumed somewhat significant proportions. There are not a multitude of firms, certainly, but the few there are pushing business. The depression which has been felt in the trade in other parts of the country has been felt here. There is, however, a slight move in the right direction, and we are looking forward to a good spring trade.

31/3/1877

There has not been any very great alteration in the state of trade here during the past month. The advent of Easter has moved things a little, but not to so large an extent as it did last year. Several firms keep well employed. Bristol certainly bids fair to increase its trade in both hard and soft felts. Other branches of the hat and cap trade are also on the increase.

1/6/1877

The wholesale houses and manufacturers have been fairly occupied during the last month. Whitsuntide brought an impetus to trade, not equal, perhaps, to that of last year. I am convinced that with brighter weather would come better trade.

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